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VOL. 2, No. 70. FEB. 8, 1883. ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION, $25.00

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THE BERBER,

OR

The Mountaineer of the Atlas.

BY

W. S. MAYO.

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JOHN W. LOVELL COMPANY,
14 & 16 VESEY STREET.

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THE BERBER.

CHAPTER I.

NEAR the banks of the Guadalete, and not far from the shore, where by several mouths the shallow stream pours its waters into the beautiful bay of Cadiz, stood some hundred and fifty years since, the *quinta* or *casa di campo* of Don Pedro de Estivan. The building itself was one of but little pretension, either as to size or architectural merit; but the grounds were extensive—stretching, with a magnificent sweep, from the suburbs of Puerto Santa Maria down to the shore of the bay—the terraced gardens overlooking the rippling surf, being separated from the beach by a rampart merely, of large stones, surmounted by a marble balustrade.

It was upon this balustrade—at the close of one of those glowing but cool and balmy Summer days, for which the climate of Andalusia is so famous—that a lady leaned, gazing with pensive air upon the golden waters. Her dark eyes, bordered by long lashes and shadowed by jetty brows, arched and sharply defined, floated in lustrous langour over the glorious scene. Her black hair was arranged in festoons and secured by a large comb of tortoise-shell and gold. One jeweled hand confined the folds of her mantilla beneath her chin; the other, holding the closed fan, rested in careless grace upon the marble. Her foot—that tiny, plump, playful foot, for which the Gaditana* ever has been, and ever will be world-renowned—was partially revealed from beneath the drapery of her basquina, as it was raised upon the narrow banquette of the balustrade. Her form was of the

* So called from Gades, the ancient name of Cadiz.

medium height, and, although well-rounded and full, was far from being heavy. Her attitude was one of perfect repose; but there was a wavy, undulatory air about it, delicious in itself, but perfectly enchanting in its promise of mobile grace. It seemed as if the very atmosphere was anxious to anticipate her will, and held itself in conscious readiness to yield to the slightest indication of motion.

Oh! it was a beautiful picture, that fair, young Spanish girl as she stood thus leaning on the marble, beneath a canopy of vines, and gazing with pensive mien upon the sandy beach, the rippling water, and, in the distance, the glittering walls and towers of the renowned city of Hercules rising from out the bosom of the ocean. It was a beautiful picture as she stood thus gazing at the numerous lateen craft that dotted the surface of the bay, the tall galleons and men-of war of the Caraca and the inner roadstead, the numerous sails that crowded the seaward passage between Rota and Point Sebastian, and in particular, one small boat, rowed by a single oarsman, that for an hour and more had been slowly approaching the bar of the Guadalete.

A beautiful picture it was—one of unrivaled loveliness, a spectator would have been tempted to say—and yet at that very moment, in the neighboring dominions of the Moor, might have been seen one equally beautiful and strikingly similar. Let us flit in imagination for one moment, by the bold head-land of Trafalgar, across the Straits of Gibraltar, and over the hills and valleys of Mogreb-el-Acsa, or "the extreme west," as the Arabs call the Kingdom of Fez, until we stand upon the terraced roofs of Mequinez, the favorite city of the famous Muley Ismael, the then reigning sovereign of Morocco. It was at that very hour of that very Summer's afternoon: the sun was just sinking to his ocean bed beyond the broad and beautiful plain of Marmora, tingeing with his level beams the peaks of the Djebel Tedla, and lighting up the silvery reach of the Ordom as it wound its way through the delicious valley of Mequinez. The first chant of the Mueddins floated over the thronged city on the evening breeze, and instantly were hushed the noises that came up from the broad market-places and the narrow streets—a whole city was at prayer!

A young girl rose from a pile of cushions in a corner of the parapet surrounding the flat roof of a house that stood within

a few steps of the vast inclosure designated as the "Palace of the Sultan." With a gesture of impatience she tossed the guitar, upon which she had been playing, from her, and leaned upon an angle of the railing that encircled the square court. Her figure, tall and light, but well rounded. was finely set off by a tightly fitting caftan or vest of green velvet worked with gold thread, from beneath which fell a short skirt of linen. Her arms were bare, nearly to the shoulder, save three or four bracelets of emeralds and pearls. Around each delicate and nicely turned ankle, the proportions of which were unconcealed by other covering, there were clasped broad anklets of massive silver. Her feet were thrust carelessly into wide slippers of worked cordovan, from which at times they were half withdrawn, as if to afford a glimpse of what they would have been in the nicely-fitting shoe of the Gaditana. Her hair was braided and secured by a bandeau of silk and gold. Her eyes, dark and lustrous as hers of Cadiz, were relieved by even longer lashes and a more finely drawn eyebrow. A continuation of the eyebrow, however, by a dark line drawn in a curve upon the temples, would have produced upon a Christian eye a somewhat questionable effect, and, in conjunction with a brilliant circle of red paint upon either cheek, would, perhaps, have detracted slightly from the influence of a broad, smooth brow, a delicate aquiline nose, a mouth small and of exquisite shape, and of capabilities fully corresponding to the eye in the way of passion and affection, and a chin deeply dimpled and curved to the most perfect oval.

The maiden gazes for a moment down into the court below, where several female slaves are hurrying to and fro, scolding and jostling each other as they proceed in their preparations for the evening meal. Her short, pouting lip curls with an expression of contempt, and turning, her eye sweeps over the broad scene—the wide expanse of whitewashed roofs, from which tower up the glittering minarets of the mosques—the lofty peaks and broad slopes of the Atlas, until reaching the North it becomes fixed in vacancy. Suddenly an expression of sternness comes over those delicate features, and then a sigh undulates the palpitating outline of her bosom. The maiden is dreaming of the traditionary glories of Andalusia. In fancy she visits the house of her ancestors; the very key of which, preserved with reverential care, hangs in the court below. The halls and fountains of the Alhambra rise upon her imagi-

nation; she sees the battlefield by the banks of the Guadelete, where base Roderick yielded up his kingdom to the fiery valor of Tarik and his followers; she sees the gardens of Seville, and the mosques, and palaces and bridges, and baths of Cordova and Toledo, and soft, sunny Xerez; she hears the mingled sounds of the tournament and the bull-fight—the shouts of the populace—the tramp of the war-steed—the clangor of drum and cymbal, and the clash of buckler and spear. She hears the soft tones of rebec and guitar mingled with the sound of joyous voices—and oh! how her heart swells, and her form dilates, and her eye flashes, as she catches the strains of an old ballad:

"Rise up! Rise up, Xaripha!
Lay your golden cushion down;
Rise up! come to the window,
And gaze with all the town.

From gay guitar and violin
The silver notes are flowing,
And the lovely lute doth speak between
The trumpet's lordly blowing.

And banners bright from lattice light
Are waving everywhere,
And the tall plume of Andallah
Floats proudly in the air."

Oh, it was a beautiful picture! as she stood thus gazing and dreaming—that fair young Moorish maiden, with her passionate eye and quivering lip—it was a beautiful picture; but what has it to do with the similar picture of the lovely Gaditana on the shore of the bay of Cadiz? Much—much that neither of those graceful beings could have dreamed of at the time, as they stood thus unknown to each other, ignorant of each other's existence even, but intimately connected in the commingling destinies of their future lives.

A beautiful picture it was, but we may not dwell on it at the present moment—the exigencies of our story demanding a return to the garden on the banks of the Guadalete.

The eye of the Gaditana was steadily watching the boat, with its single oarsman, that was slowly making its way from Cadiz, towards the entrance of the river. As it came closer, although still too distant to permit a recognition of the boatman's features, her interest in his movements seemed to deepen, until her attention became so concentrated that she

scarcely heard her name as it was shouted three or four times in a clear girlish voice amid the labyrinth of vines.

"Isabel! Isabel! where are you? Where have you hidden yourself?" And a tall and lithesome figure bounded into sight, and tripped a-down the arbor with a step in which was mingled an uncommon degree of lightness and elasticity with the usual grace of the Andaluza. "See, Isabel, I have finished the last leaf of my rose," and the young girl held out a piece of embroidery, such as still, in the present day, frequently occupies the attention of the Spanish fair. "Congratulate your Juanita, sister dear, upon finishing such a precious piece of work! Come, don't you admire it?"

"I do," replied the elder sister, "despite the long thorns with which you have seen fit to environ your flower. How could you have drawn them so out of all proportion?"

"Oh, partly accident, and partly design," returned Juanita. "You see, Isabel dear, this rose is emblematical—it is not one of our common garden roses—it is one of the roses of life, and those, you know, have monstrous long thorns!"

"Indeed, Juanita, and how came you to know anything of the thorns on the roses of life?"

"Oh, did not Father Padilla tell us all about them last Sunday—how long they were, and how sharp? And have we not better authority for them than that in the poets and romancers? Oh, there is not a page of Dante and Tasso, where glows a rose, beneath which you cannot see the thorns—and long ones too. Besides, Isabel, you forget that I am nearly sixteen. I have my experiences."

"You, Juanita!" exclaimed the elder sister, with a sigh, as she turned her eyes once more to the boat, that was now within a few yards of the shore.

"Yes, I—I may not have been pricked very deeply as yet by the thorns of life, but can one wound your heart, dearest Isabel, without my feeling it too?"

The young girl threw her arms tenderly about the elder sister, and both leaned in silence upon the marble.

The two sisters closely resembled each other, but to an observant eye there was a marked difference in the form and expression of their features, clearly indicating a corresponding difference of character and mental power. The younger was the taller of the two, and her figure, though less round and full, had more buoyancy and apparent strength and

agility. Her forehead was higher and broader, her nostrils more arched and prominent, and her lips somewhat thinner and more sharply defined. Hers was a face that, even in repose, beamed with an expression of intellect, passion and will, while that of her sister was chiefly remarkable for its air of yielding delicacy and affection. Even the very attitudes in which they stood gave token of the superior energy of the younger. With her arms thrown round the eminently femine form of her elder sister, the graceful Juanita seemed not more disposed to caress than to protect.

"Dearest Isabel," resumed the young girl, "why do you let them make you so miserable?"

"How can I help it, Juanita? Is not the prospect of being forced into a marriage with any one enough to make me miserable?—but with our cousin Orsolo—horrible!"

"So horrible," replied Juanita, "that I would refuse to contemplate it. I would soon take means to put an end to such a prospect.

"How? in what manner?" demanded her sister.

"I would at once assert my determination never to submit to such a profanation—such a sacrilege," exclaimed the young girl, drawing up her slight figure to its full height.

"And pass the rest of your days in a convent?" replied Isabel.

"I would see Don Diego de Orsolo himself," returned Juanita. "I would tell him that I loved him not; that I could not marry him."

"'Twould be of no avail," responded Isabel. "Don Diego has no magnanimity—no generosity. He deems me the heir of my aunt's estates of Ronda Fronta. He would not persecute me so, did he think I should inherit only the slender fortunes of the Estivans. 'Tis money that he wants as much or more than my love."

"I would tell him then," exclaimed Juanita—her black eyes flashing, and her arched nostril dilating, and her short lip quivering with passion—"I would tell him that I hated—that I despised him. I would tell him the story over again, if he has forgotten it, of one of our family--Maria of the dagger—who stabbed herself at the altar—I would tell him that, like hers, my dagger should gleam, were it in the eyes of all the priests and nobles of Spain; but that, instead of my bosom, it should find a fitter sheath in his own dastard heart. I would dare him to marry me!"

"Hush! hush! Juanita—you frighten me," exclaimed Isabel, recoiling before the excited looks and convulsive grasp of her sister; "you might drive him away, for Don Diego is a coward. But think of the alternative—a convent for life."

"Marry, then, your English lover, and leave country and friends. Beautiful as this is, there must surely be other scenes as fair; and sister, sooner than see you married to our cousin, I will fly with you. I care not, if it is to countries where the ministers of religion dare not, like Father Padilla, lend themselves to avarice, and licentiousness, and cruelty."

"Hush! hush! dearest Juanita, you make me tremble—you are so wild—so passionate—so—"

"Heretical—you would say. Well, I care not. If to despise cousin Orsolo, and his tool, Father Padilla, is heresy, then I am a heretic. They may make an auto-da-fé for me, as they did for the poor Jew at Lisbon the other day; but they will not compel me to recant. I hate Father Padilla. Do you know, Isabel, I shouldn't be surprised to receive the attention of the Holy Office before long; for I have already intimated to the old wine-bibber my scepticism as to the possibility of a drunken priest getting to heaven, and still more, of his ability to send any one else there."

Isabel raised her hands at her sister's audacity. "Hush, foolish, wicked Juanita. Your careless words will bring us trouble. Hush ! you make me tremble."

At this moment the boat, that we have indicated as steering for the bar of the Guadalete, suddenly changed its course, and with a few vigorous strokes was sent upon the beach, some hundred yards below the garden wall where stood the sisters.

"Look there, Juanita," exclaimed the elder, as the boatman sprang lightly to the shore.

"'Tis your English lover—'tis Don Edward," said Juanita, after a moment's scrutiny.

"God forbid !—but 'tis as I feared," replied Isabel, pale and trembling; "what shall be done? How foolish for him to venture. He little knows the danger that threatens him."

"He's over bold, indeed," returned Juanita, "to come in the daylight. But, sister, you must see him now, and warn him of his danger. 'Twould be wrong, indeed, to

leave so brave a gallant to the dagger of such a coward as our cousin"

"No, no, I cannot, exclaimed the elder; I dare not." But the impulsive and impetuous Juanita, unheeding her sister's remonstrance, waved her handkerchief in the air; a signal that the young boatman replied to by raising his hat, and then advancing, concealed by the low banks of sand from view from the balconies of the *quinta*.

"I will go and keep watch," said Juanita. "Don Diego and Father Padilla are here; for I saw them talking with several strange-looking fellows but a few moments since. If I notice anything suspicious, I will sing you a verse of the Cid in my loudest key; but wait not for my voice, dispatch your lover in all haste, for much I fear his coming is known."

So saying, her lithe and slender figure vanished amid the foliage of the winding arbors.

CHAPTER II.

It was somewhere about the year 1671 or '72, that a young Englishman, named Henry Carlyle, settled himself as a merchant at Cadiz. Altough, at first, but an agent for his principals in England, who were largely interested in the then rapidly increasing trade in the famous products of the vineyards of Xeres, he soon won for himself, by his industry and attention to business, and by the skill and judgment he evinced in dealing with the jealous and bigoted Spaniard, a character and a standing that at length enabled him to set up for himself, and eventually led to the accumulation of a fortune. The fortune put it in his power to marry one of the seven lovely daughters of a poor English baronet, and the marriage finally made him the father of two fine boys.

Justly proud were the worthy parents of their twin-children. Inheriting, on the part of their father, an excellent, although somewhat plebeian constitution, and on the part of their mother some of the best blood of England, they grew rapidly in beauty and strength: and, from the first, exhibited such a close resemblance to each other as often to puzzle their fond parents as to their separate identities.

The rich merchant had a country seat near the shore of

the Atlantic, a little above Rota, where the twins passed most of their time in charge of an English tutor and a Scotch nurse, but under the immediate eye of the jealous and watchful mother. Her jealousy and watchfulness, however, served not to save one of the twins from a fate to which, in those days, all the dwellers by the sea-side were constantly exposed; and which, to the apprehensions of a good Christian, seemed more terrible than death.

The children had reached the age of ten, when one day—about fifteen years previous to the date of the scene with which our story opens—they were surprised by a party of Moors who had landed from a Salee corsair. At the first appearance of the pirates, who had secreted themselves among the sand hills on the shore, one of the boys was hurried along by his tutor in full speed for the house. The timely warning and a good start enabled him to make his escape; but his brother Henry, who had wandered wide, was intercepted and seized. Long before any attempts could be made for his rescue, the pirates had taken to their boats, and put off from the shore to rejoin their galley, which, disguised as a fishing vessel, was waiting for them on the bar off the Guadalquiver.

A visit from Maroquien and Algerine cruisers was then too common an event on the coasts of Spain to excite much attention, especially when, as in this case, the loss was so slight—only one child, and he the son of an Englishmen, and a heretic—and nothing was done by the Spanish officials to rescue the child or to punish the pirates, although it was known from an escaped galley slave, that they were bound for further depredations to the coast of Portugal. Every means, however, that the afflicted father could employ were taken for the recovery of his child. The British agent at the court of Muley Ismael was written to in relation to the matter, and money was sent to the superior of the Spanish Father of the Redemption, at Mequinez, for the ransom of the boy. But all exertions availed nothing; no tidings could be had of him from any source, and the conjecture was general with all who knew anything of Moorish habits and notions, that his captors, sordid and avaricious as they were, preferred the conversion of his young and impressible mind to the true faith to selling him for a slave or to offering him for redemption.

Thankful for the escape of one son, it required but a few months to assuage the father's grief at the loss of the other. Not so with the mother, who refused to be comforted. The idea of her lost child—living, but living in the habits and the belief of a Mohammedan—took complete possession of her mind. Her health rapidly declined, and in little more than a year, she found refuge from her grief in the grave.

Upon the loss of his mother, young Edward was sent to England, where he resided for six or seven years at school. At the end of this period he retnrned to his father, who needed his aid in the counting-room at Cadiz and the wine-vaults of Puerto Santa Maria. A short trial, however, soon satisfied both father and son that the mercantile profession was not the one to which the young man's tastes and talents were best adapted. His own inclination wavered between the profession of arms and the pursuit of literature; but before deciding definitely as to his future career, his father resolved that he should see something more of the world. The cool and sagacious merchant, whose judgment was unwarped either by his affection for his graceful, good-looking boy, or by his really justifiable pride in his showy talents and accomplishments, saw much in his desultory habits, and in his enthusiastic but vascillating turn of mind, to make him doubt his persistence in any pursuit, unless entered upon with all due consideration. This, however, was of less consequence in the mind of the father than he would have been willing to allow to the son. He knew that his boy would inherit an ample fortune, and it was a subject, therefore, of but little regret that he possessed not those plodding and methodical habits that would be most likely to increase it. To fit him for enjoying his fortune as a gentleman was now the principal object in the father's mind, and he accordingly at once gave his consent to a proposed tour with one of his schoolmates through the Continent and to the Levant. From this tour he had returned, some two or three months previous to the date of the events in the last chapter, to find his father in a declining state of health, and himself a subject of watchful jealousy to certain Spanish officials, religious and political, who had made up their minds for a share of the rich heretic's fortune.

At that time, the situation of a Protestant merchant in a Spanish port was a very delicate and difficult one. Com-

mercial jealousy, national animosity, and religious hate, all conspired in a degree, unknown in the present day, to embarrass his movements and endanger his gains. What the myrmidons of the law could not affect, the ministers of religion frequently succeeded in accomplishing, and the Inquisition, then in full force, stepping in, the plunder and ruin of the unlucky culprit were complete. By his prudence, energy, personal influence, and knowledge of Spanish customs and character, the father of Edward had managed to maintain his ground against all the evil influences around him; but now, that his health was beginning to fail him, the hopes of the cormorants, who had long had an eye to his money-bags, began to revive. Between these hopes and their ultimate gratification stood the young heir, and it was a question that had already begun to be agitated, whether he was to be disposed of by open despoliation, or the chicanery of the law —by the dagger of the assassin, or the dungeons of the Inquisition.

Such was the condition of affairs when, as if to complicate his position with still further difficulties and dangers, the young Don Edward suffered his ardent fancy to become captive to the bright eyes and graceful form of Isabel de Estivan. Contrary to the usual Spanish custom, the fair Andaluza had been brought up without female supervision, and with very little restriction upon her habits and movements. Her mother had been dead several years. Her only relative, an aunt, was too much engrossed with the care of her estates to take any immediate interest in the training of her nieces. Her father's circumstances were too embarrassed to enable him to keep up for his daughters a fitting establishment of duenna and attendants, while he was too busily occupied by his intrigues for office and fortune to bestow any very close attention upon them himself. This freedom, however, from the usual restrictions of Spanish domestic life was the result of circumstances, not of principles; and there wanted nothing but some occasion for suspicion to arouse, in all its vigor, the authority of the father and the watchfulness of friends. An acquaintance with the handsome young heretic, formed at an evening *tertulia*, ripened rapidly in two or three accidental meetings upon the Alemeda and the Plaza del Antonio into an intimacy that soon aroused jealousy, and called for active interference. The fair Gaditana was at once con-

fined to the house, and her admirer, when breathing forth his regret at her absence to the accompaniment of his guitar, was one night assaulted by a party of ruffians, and had it not been for his extraordinary skill with his good "toledo," would have been put beyond the reach of Cupid's arrows for evermore. As it was, he barely escaped, with wounds that confined him to his chamber for weeks, and in the meantime his dulcinea was removed to an old, dilapidated family country seat on the other side of the bay of Cadiz, at the mouth of the Guadalete.

Though not of the highest nobility, the family of Don Pedro de Estivan were of the best blood of Spain. But unluckily his fortunes did not, as we have said, correspond either to his birth or to his own notions of his deserts. Like many of his countrymen he was both poor and proud, and this put him very much in the power of a rich kinsman, Don Diego de Orsolo, who had conceived a violent passion for the fair Isabel, or rather for the magnificent estates of a rich but penurious aunt, to which it was supposed she would become heir. Cold and selfish and ill-favored, Don Diego was not the man to win the heart of a fair maiden, especially when there was a handsome and accomplished lover in the way; but jealous, revengeful and determined, he was just the man to take any means, however atrocious, to remove a rival, or to secure possession of an unwilling bride.

By the agents of Don Diego the movements of the young Englishman were closely watched, and great was the wrath of both the dons when it was found that upon two or three occasions the temerarious gallant had crossed the bay, and had tinkled his guitar in the stillness of the night under the balconies of the *quinta*. Such audacity in a heretic, an Englishman, and the son of a trader, deserved the severest punishment; and Don Diego took upon himself the charge of inflicting it. A severe beating or a gentle blood-letting would have satisfied Don Pedro; but Don Diego resolved that his revenge should be deadly and sure, and, at the same time, safe and profitable; to effect which he had no scruple to call to his aid the officials of the Inquisition.

CHAPTER III.

THE adventurous boatman raised his hat in reply to the signal of the younger sister. Crouching low, he attained the shelter of the garden wall, and then advanced with a rapid pace until he stood directly beneath the balustrade where leaned the fair Isabel.

No wonder that she liked not the idea of marrying her ungainly, grim-visaged kinsman, Don Diego—not that she was very much in love with the graceful Englishman; but her fancy had been unquestionably taken, and her admiration excited by his handsome features, his fair open brow, his clear hazel eye, his frank, good-natured smile, and his figure, tall, symmetrical, and abounding in those nameless, natural indications of combined activity and strength.

The first impulse of the timid Isabel had been to follow the footsteps of her more energetic and vivacious sister; but a moment's thought of the danger that threatened the young man checked her movements, and with a degree of excitement that drove the blood from her usually richly-tinted cheek, she awaited his approach.

"Thanks, fair lady," he exclaimed, gracefully taking his sombrero from his head, and shaking back the clustering curls of dark auburn as he raised his eyes to the maiden above him: "Thanks for this kindness—this condescension; I had begun to despair of ever seeing you again."

"Hush! señor," replied Isabel, bending down over the balustrade, and speaking in a low tone: "This is no time for the language of compliment; you are surrounded by enemies; your life is in danger."

"Danger!" exclaimed Edward; "ah! there is no danger for me equal to that which lies in those black eyes. But why are you so agitated? what is it that alarms you!"

The young man placed his foot in a crevice between the stones and seized the branches of a trailing vine that had been suffered to overgrow the crest of the rampart. Isabel threw up her arms, as if deprecating his nearer approach; but before she could utter a word he had drawn himself up, and leaping the balustrade, stood by her side.

"Indeed, señor, you are too bold," exclaimed the maiden, as soon as she could recover her voice.

"Pardon me, señorita," replied Edward; "I would not intrude upon you; but you know—"

"Nay, it is not that;" interrupted Isabel, "I mean not that you are too bold as respects myself; in that I have perhaps given you too much warrant for boldness; but you are too bold, too careless, in regard to the threats and designs of your enemies."

"Enemies!" exclaimed Edward; "I have no enemy but Don Diego, and his enmity I court, as it is the necessary consequence of your favor."

"Do not interrupt me, señor," continued Isabel, "I have but a moment to speak to you. I have waited here only to give you warning. You have enemies—many of them. You are watched, señor, closely watched; every movement of yours is known; and much I misdoubt me if malicious eyes are not upon us this very moment."

"Let them," interrupted Edward, taking her hand; "Let them watch; I care not, since neither the eyes nor the daggers belonging to their owners, can pierce my heart so cruelly as those bright orbs of yours. *Que hermosos ojos!* Ah, who could resist them?"

"Oh, speak not so contemptuously, señor, of the danger that threatens you. You could not, I am sure, so brave it, if you understood its nature. It is not the dagger of the assassin that frightens me most, though they may not fail the second time. It is something far worse. I shudder to think of it."

"What is it, *mi queridita?*" demanded the young man, drawing the shrinking maiden towards him; "what is it that you fear for me?"

"The Inquisition!" replied Isabel, with a shudder.

"Ha!" exclaimed her lover, the blood retreating for a moment from his cheek, "they would not dare—"

"Not in the streets of Cadiz; it would be too public; it would attract too much attention, and arouse all your friends; but on this side of the bay—here at Puerto Santa Maria—you can be seized and consigned to a dungeon without giving any clue to your fate. You may come to light again when your father is a beggar, stripped of all his fortune for the ransom of his son. Trust me, there is a scheme on foot against you and your father's wealth; a conspiracy between certain hungry priests and your deadliest enemy, Don Diego de Orsolo."

"How know you this?" demanded Edward.

"I know it," eagerly returned the maiden, "from Father Padilla. Juanita extracted the whole plan from him when he was garrulous with wine. Juanita is shrewd beyond her years; and I know not how it is, but I am getting to repose more confidence in her quickness and intelligence than in my own. I know it, too, from the threat of Don Diego, and from the presence of numerous officials of the Inquisition around the house. Oh! trust me; I know it too well. You have not a moment to lose. See, the twilight is fading. Go, while you have yet power—in a few moments it may be too late—quick! to your boat!" exclaimed the excited Isabel, as the voice of her sister came to her ear :—

"The king had taken an order that they should rear an arch,
From house to house, all over the way that they must march;
They had hung it all with lances, and shields, and glittering helms,
Brought by the campeador from out the Moorish realms."

The loud clear voice of Juanita rose almost to a shriek, as she sang the last line.

"Quick!—to your boat at once—ah! linger not; you little know the imminence of the danger; back to Cadiz; there you are comparatively safe; but tarry not even there if you can possibly leave the country."

"Never, Isabel. How can you be so cruel as to propose it? Ah, your coldness wounds me deeper than could the dagger of Don Diego."

But further conversation was cut short by the appearance of Juanita, who came flying down the avenue with every mark of excitement and alarm.

"Fly, señor," exclaimed the young girl energetically, grasping Edward by the arm; "to your boat—quickly and cautiously! Do you see that clump of shrubbery beyond the garden-wall? Behind that are concealed a party of men, who are there to watch your motions. You will have to pass them on your way to your boat. Do so leisurely until you are beyond them, and then haste for your life. Do you comprehend me? Well—no words—God speed you. Come, Isabel;" and, seizing her sister's arm, Juanita drew her rapidly up the arbor, leaving the somewhat astonished gallant standing motionless, gazing upon the retreating figures, and half disposed to spring after them and detain them, at least until he had taken leave in a manner better befitting an in-

terview which it had cost the labor of rowing eight or ten miles to obtain.

The earnest tones and energetic gesture of the younger maiden had, however, their effect. A conviction of the danger of his situation flashed across Edward's mind. He turned, and leaping the balustrade, swung himself lightly down the terrace wall to the beach.

Mindful of the caution he had received, he strolled leisurely along, stopping now and then to fling a pebble on the water, until he was abreast of the spot indicated by Juanita as the lurking place of his foes. He knew that any appearance of haste would bring them at once upon him, whereas, if he could make them think that he was disposed to remain until night, they, too, would be willing to wait until darkness should enable them to attack him without being observed, and in perhaps a greater force than in so short a time they had been able to collect.

Slowly he paced to and fro in front of his ambushed enemy —gradually gaining ground at each turn towards his boat. Suddenly three or four heads appeared above the angle of the wall, and in a moment more, half a dozen men sprang to the beach.

Edward paused not for a moment, but darting forward at full speed, reached his boat some distance ahead of his pursuers. Unluckily the tide had ebbed a little, leaving his boat somewhat higher on the beach, but exerting his utmost strength, he succeeded in shoving it into the water and jumping in himself, just as the foremost of his foes came up to him.

"Yield thee, señor, to the warrant of the Holy Office," exclaimed the panting official, at the same time rushing into the water and laying hold of the bow of the boat.

With a sweep of his oar that laid his pursuer floundering in the water, the young man replied to the summons. With another vigorous push the boat shot out beyond the reach of further molestation.

A shout of rage and a volley of curses were sent after him by the Spaniards—while, adjusting his oars in their rowlocks, he quietly pulled out into the bay, over which was beginning to steal the luminous gray of an Andulusian Summer's night. There was light enough, however, to show the disappointed officials and their ruffian companions grouped for a moment

in consultation—the next he saw them start off at a furious pace in the direction of some fishing-boats drawn up upon the beach.

"They will soon be after me," muttered Edward, "but thank God here comes the easterly breeze—with a dozen oars against one pair of sculls, there would be but a poor chance in a chase of eight miles—the levante, however, will put us more on an equality."

Laying down his oars, the young man quickly stepped a short mast, and rigged upon it a slender lateen yard with a light sail attached. He then shipped the rudder, and hoisting and squaring the sail, the little vessel darted off over the smooth water before the light breath of the easterly breeze.

Edward gazed astern: he could just see the slender yard of a small felucca—a fishing boat probably—with the furled sail attached. At that moment the sail fell from the yard, and a broad patch of canvas showed that his pursuers were also about to take advantage of the freshening levante.

The young man, seizing the tiller ropes, carefully seated himself so as to trim the boat to an even keel. As his little bark quietly and steadily skimmed the surface of the bay, he had leisure to think over all the circumstances of his situation, and to speculate on the probable chances of escape. The appalling nature of the danger broke upon him with a degree of distinctness that it never could have had when under the immediate influence of the dark eyes of the Gaditana. He knew, that if captured thus, secretly, at night, his friends all ignorant of his fate, his doom was sealed; and that if the dungeons of the Inquisition once closed upon him, no matter how preposterous the charge, or how transparent the pretext, a long imprisonment, ending only with loss of fortune, and perhaps of life, would be his fate.

"Better die than be taken," he exclaimed, starting from his reverie. "Better any fate than the cells of the Holy Office."

Drawing his rapier, he placed it so as to be within reach; and then loosing his dagger in its sheath, he proceeded to ungird the woolen sash from around his waist, and to wind it over his left arm. "It may serve to receive a stab or to ward a blow," he muttered.

He looked again for the felucca; it was now night, but her broad sail was distinctly visible and evidently much

nearer. There was also the gleam of oar-blades, as, dripping with the water, they flashed upward in the bright star-light. The creaking and working of the sweeps in their grommets became more and more audible.

"Ha!" exclaimed Edward, "they are in earnest. And all this risk," he continued musingly, "for a girl who loves me not. I can see it in her eyes. There is a depth of passion in those bright but quiet orbs that I have failed to stir: no, she likes me well, but she loves me not. And I,—am I in love with her? *Caramba!* the very question should be its own answer: a passing fancy may be stopped and challenged, but true love cannot be questioned: as well question the broad sunlight, whether it is day. No—I do not love her. But, by all the saints, she is a glorious creature! I could love her—yes, I could love her! Methinks, did she love me, a single glance of passion would melt my soul, were it of adamant, and fuse it into one with hers; but as it is—ah! my love is hardly worth risking a dungeon for. I am willing to brave a dagger's thrust for almost any fair lady; but the Inquisition—that is a different matter!"

The young man gazed anxiously around the horizon. There were other sails in sight, but none near enough to aid him. even supposing that their crews would have dared to oppose themselves to a warrant from the Holy Office. His boat was now in the centre of the bay, and his pursuers about four or five hundred yards astern, slowly, but surely, gaining upon him. Convulsively his hand grasped the hilt of his rapier, when suddenly an idea flashed upon his mind that made him bound from his reclining posture with a renewed hope of escape.

"By heavens, I'll try it!" he exclaimed; "I hardly think that they will follow me, if I can get a good offing." And springing forward, he swayed down and secured the yard in a position more nearly approaching a perpendicular; trimmed the sheet aft, and, seizing the tiller, turned the bow of his boat directly seaward; steering a course that led about midway between the extreme point of Cadiz on the one hand, and the village of Rota on the other.

It was some little time before the crew of the felucca observed this change of course; but the instant it was seen, they also hauled to the wind and continued the chase.

For full an hour both boats held their way, until Rota and

Punta Catalena at the mouth of the bay were left far behind. They were now fairly out at sea, and still no signs of any disposition on the part of the Spaniards to abandon the pursuit. Edward knew not that Don Diego himself was on board the felucca, urging and directing her movements, or he never would have indulged the hope of shaking off his pursuers by standing out to sea.

Again did his heart sink within him, as he saw the steadiness with which the felucca held on his course, and noted the short distance—not more than sixty or eighty yards—that now intervened. Twenty minutes more would decide his fate—and such a fate! He thought of his father—of Isabel—of the dungeons of the Inquisition; and he looked for a moment bitterly upon the dark water, half tempted to bury his anxiety beneath its surface.

"No, no," he muttered to himself, "that would be cowardly. Better leap aboard of them, and trust to sword and dagger!"

But as he spoke thus, the thought of jumping overboard suggested a new plan of escape. If he could make his pursuers believe, for the time, that he had leaped overboard and gone to the bottom, he might possibly elude their grasp as effectually as if such had actually been his fate. With characteristic readiness he lost not a moment in carrying his plan into execution. Taking a small short cord, he fastened it to the lower bolt confining the rudder to the stern; seizing the other end of the cord and unshipping the rudder, with a loud splash he plunged into the water, just as a summons to yield himself, mixed with a volley of Spanish imprecations, came from the rapidly advancing felucca. Drawing himself up by the cord, he allowed his body to sink until his mouth came a little above the surface of the water, while his head was securely concealed in the black shadow cast by the square-raking stern that projected several feet beyond the bolt to which the cord was attached.

The little vessel, no longer governed by the rudder, at once broached to, and her sail being taken aback, she lost headway and lay boxing about in the light breeze. In a few moments the felucca was alongside; but mindful of the young Englishman's prowess, her crew were at first rather cautious about coming very close, and it was some little time before they ascertained that the boat was empty. Great was their

astonishment, and not less their rage, at this sudden disappearance of their prey. They strained their eyes in vain over the dark surface of the water; they held their breaths and listened intently; but the idea of any one undertaking to reach the shore by swimming was too preposterous. There could be but one opinion in relation to the case. The vile heretic, in utter contempt of the Holy Office, had preferred drowning himself to submitting to the tender mercies of the cowled council at Xerez de la Fronterra.

"Maledictions rest on his soul!" exclaimed one of the two familiars accompanying the party; "he has escaped us; he must have jumped overboard when we heard that plunge in the water. No doubt he tied the anchor to his body, and is now a hundred fathoms deep, at least."

"Just like all those cursed Englishmen," replied his companion. "They think nothing of committing suicide. I've been told that, in their own country, more than half of them cut their throats or drown themselves before they are thirty years old."

"'Tis their climate," interrupted a grim ruffian; "I've been there. *Caramba!* what clouds and fogs."

"Partly their climate, but more their religion," returned the official. "They are heretics, and knowing they must go to hell at any rate, they don't care when or how."

After some debate, it was decided to take the boat in tow and row back to the city. Securely hidden in the deep shadow under the overhanging stern, the young man listened to the conversation carried on above him with no little interest. He had confidently speculated upon his pursuers abandoning the boat when they should find that he had disappeared, and that with him had gone both oars and rudder. In which case he could easily regain his position in the boat, and wait until the morning sea-breeze should set him back to the shore. The proposition to take his boat in tow of the felucca somewhat disturbed his plans; but still he trusted to his ability to maintain his position until near enough to the shore, and then to quietly slip his hold and gain a landing by swimming. There was the prospect of a good salt-water drenching, but the water was warm, the surface smooth, the air balmy and delicious. His, too, were a constitution and a frame that could endure any amount of exposure to the elements; and, as to the muscular exertion necessary to

maintain his position, his body was so supported by the water, that he had no doubt of his ability to hold on for four or five hours at the least. Congratulating himself upon the success, so far, of his bold experiment, he surrendered himself with good heart to be towed back to land.

CHAPTER IV.

STEADILY the crew of the felucca tugged at their oars, but with such a drag upon their efforts, as the boat with the body of the young Englishman hanging from the stern, their movements through the water were necessarily slow. The uncommon degree of resistance arising from an apparently light, empty boat, at length began to attract attention, which would probably have resulted in an investigation into the cause; but luckily the eyes of all on board the felucca were suddenly drawn to a large vessel lying close to on their larboard bow. So rapidly and imperceptibly had she glided down upon them, that she seemed almost to have started up from the bosom of the ocean, like some marine apparition—the ghost of a galley—long, low, lateen-rigged, with three masts, and capable of rowing, when necessary, full forty heavy sweeps.

The crew of the felucca involuntarily rested on their oars. For a few moments all was dark and silent aboard the strange craft. Suddenly, a hoarse hail, in Spanish, came across the water.

"Boat ahoy! what boat is that? Come alongside of us. I wish to speak to you!"

A shudder ran through the crew of the felucca, as the ominous order fell upon their ears. The command was given in good Spanish, but there was some slight peculiarity of tone and pronunciation that, combined with the suspicious looks of the strange craft, instantaneously carried conviction and consternation to each heart on board of the felucca.

"*Los piratos!*" whispered one; "*Los Moros!—Santa María purísima!*—the Moors! the Moors!"

"Stretch out—for your lives!—while I will cast off the boat," exclaimed Don Diego, his teeth fairly chattering with fear.

The men dropped their sweeps into the water, and threw their whole weight and strength with desperate energy upon them, while Don Diego, with shaking hands, endeavored in vain to undo the knot fastening the painter of the boat to the stern of the felucca. He drew his dagger to cut the rope; but, in his agitation, it fell from his hand. Before he could recover it, the sharp report of a brass culverin, from the forecastle of the strange galley, made him drop beside it, paralyzed with terror. The ball, striking the water a few yards from the felucca, and rebounding, dashed an oar-blade to splinters, and passed on directly over the heads of the panic-stricken crew.

"*Malditos perros!*" shouted the voice from the galley, "unbelieving dogs—hounds—Kaffirs—do you dare! Round to, this instant, and come alongside, or I'll blow your boat out of the water!"

There was no escape. A few strokes of the oars put the felucca alongside of the galley, and directly beneath the eyes of a formidable row of fellows, in high fez-caps, who were looking over the low bulwarks. With sundry imprecations, in Spanish and Arabic, Don Diego and his companions were ordered on deck, where, after undergoing a slight examination as to their character and circumstances, before the *Bash sota Rais*, or first lieutenant of the galley, the sailors were chained to several oars that happened to be wanting their usual complement of men; while the Don and his agents, the familiars of the Holy Office, were stripped of their arms and most of their clothing, manacled and thrust, with no very tender regard to their bones, down into a hole under the forecastle.

In the meantime, Edward, taking advantage of the darkness, and of the fact that the stern of his boat was close in under the counter of the galley, let go his hold, and with a single stroke of his arms gained the rudder, where holding on by the rope-gammoning—that instead of iron-pintals served to fasten the rudder to the stern-post—he resolved to await the movements of the Moors in relation to the boats. Should they cut them adrift, he held himself in readiness to float off quietly in time so as not to lose sight of them, and when at a proper distance, to regain one of them by swimming. Luckily the young man's resolution contemplated the possibility of the boats being detained by the pirates, and his

change of position from the stern of his own boat to the rudder of the galley was effected just in time. After securing their prisoners, the Moorish captain ordered the felucca to be stripped of sails and oars. A few blows with an axe knocked a hole through her planking below the water line, and she was cast off to fill and sink, while the small boat was hauled alongside and hoisted on board.

The situation of Edward was now, to him at least, one of peculiar interest. In tow of the felucca, his mind had been almost wholly concentrated upon the one single chance of escape; but, perched on the rudder of a Salee rover, there was mingled, with a certain sense of security for the present and apprehension for the future, a decided sentiment of curiosity as to the next movement in the march of his fate.

What was to be the termination of his adventures? How was he to escape from his present position? He knew not; but he resolved to quietly await events until morning, and, if nothing happened in the meantime, then to drop into the water, stretch out from the galley, hail her, and be picked up as if from a shipwreck. In this way he should enlist in his favor whatever of humanity the pirates might possess.

The commotion in the cruiser occasioned by the capture of the boats gradually subsided. The wind freshened a little, and the pirates eased off their sheets—standing down the coast, but heading a little more off the land. A light streamed from the cabin windows of the galley. By the occasional shadows mingled with the flickering reflection on the water astern, Edward could perceive that several persons were moving about the cabin. At length all was motionless—one shadow, however, in which the young man could easily trace the outline of a head and shoulders, rested upon the illuminated space of waters. Some one was seated at the open port above him—who could it be? Was it the captain of the corsair? Edward felt his curiosity aroused, and instinctively he extended his hand to grasp the heavy mouldings on the raking stern above him. His motions were arrested by a low voice issuing from the port:

"En Paris esta Dona Alda, la espousa de Don Roldan,
Trecientas damas con ella, para la accompanar
Todas visten un vestido, todas calçan un calçar."

"In Paris sits the lady that shall be Sir Roland's bride;
Three hundred damsels with her, her bidding to abide:
All clothed in the same fashion, both the mantle and the shoon;
All eating at one table within her hall at noon."

It was an old and familiar ballad of his childhood—the first Spanish song that his mother had learned after her arrival at Cadiz, and one that she had frequently sung to her children. Edward's desire to take a look at the singer was enhanced ten-fold. At this moment, the head was withdrawn from the port, and the lamplight streamed clear again upon the glancing waters of the galley's wake.

By clinging to the mouldings of the stern, and supporting his feet upon the head, or shoulder rather, of the rudder, Edward was enabled to reach nearly to what was really the taffrail of the galley, and above which were the windows of the light poop-cabin. Directly upon this taffrail was stepped the small mast supporting the hindermost of the three latteen yards. From the belaying-pins above hung the end of one of the halyards, within tempting proximity to his hand. By letting go his hold upon the mouldings, he could easily grasp it, and haul himself up to the ledge of the taffrail on a level with the cabin windows. Should he attempt it? What if the rope should give way, and let him into the water? What if he should be discovered by the inmate of the cabin, or by some one on the deck above? He withdrew himself to his original position in the rudder chains, and turned the argument over in his mind. Again he heard a deep low voice humming the familiar air:

"En Paris esta Dona Alda, la espousa de Don Roldan."

Creeping up again by the mouldings, the young man poised his body for a moment, and then watching the slight lurching motion of the vessel, let go his hold and sprang at the rope. His grasp was successful, and the rope proved to be firmly fastened above. Waiting until the oscillations, occasioned by the projection of his body from beneath the raking stern, had ceased, he quietly drew himself up four or five feet, when he found no difficulty in transferring himself from the rope to the ledge of the taffrail, and directly between the two windows of the cabin: and all this with so little noise or disturbance as to have excited no attention from either cabin or deck.

Naturally reckless and adventurous, Edward felt quite elated at the success, so far, of the movement he had made. His spirits rose with his elevation above the increasing swell of the ocean, and in congratulating himself upon his dry and secure seat, he almost forgot the danger of the first part of the night, or the apprehension of the consequences of discovery when the morning should break. His position was one of decided advantage; seated on the taffrail, and supported by a grasp upon the foot of the mizzen-mast, but concealed by the slightly raking rise of the cabin from view above deck, he had but to lean a little on either side to look into the two open ports from which streamed the bright lamplight.

Cautiously he lowered himself till his eyes commanded a view of the interior. It was a small apartment, about ten or twelve feet square. In front, a silken curtain looped aside, showed a small door opening apparently into a forward cabin; on either side were arched recesses, canopied and shaded by curtains, in which were placed low couches. A thick Moorish carpet, of brilliant colors, covered the floor, the centre of which was occupied by a low table, hardly a foot in height. Above this table, suspended from one of the carlings, hung a large copper lamp. Upon the table lay several books, some in manuscript and mounted upon gilded rollers, and others evidently in print from their Spanish bindings. At one angle of the low table was a pile of gilt morocco cushions, and upon these reclined, in an easy attitude, the sole occupant of the cabin.

He was a young man of twenty-five or six years, dressed in Moorish garb. Leaning with one elbow upon the low table, he was intently engaged in poring over a large volume that was open before him. His side-face was turned to the stern port, and the bright light of the lamp falling full upon his features, revealed them with perfect distinctness to the fascinated gaze of the young Englishman. There was the high square forehead set off by the folds of a turban of red silk—there were the straight brows—the aquiline nose—the well-turned mouth—the full brown beard—the bronzed but ruddy cheeks—in fact the very features and expression of Edward himself. Like an electric flash, the conviction that he saw before him his brother—his long-lost twin-brother—burst upon Edward's mind, sending the blood tingling to every

vein, and making his laboring heart beat audibly beneath the overwhelming rush of feeling.

The Moor raised his eyes from the volume, threw himself back upon the cushions, and for a moment appeared lost in thought—

"En Paris esta Dona Alda, la espousa de Don Roldan."

he sang in a low voice that had, to Edward's ear, something more than familiar in it —it seemed almost as if he were singing himself. There was no longer a doubt. That turbaned and caftaned singer could be none other than the long-lost Henry Carlyle.

The first impulse of the young Englishman was to thrust himself through the open port, and grasp the singer's hand; but would he recollect his brother? Would he acknowledge the tie of blood? Would the heart of the Mohammeden open itself to a reviler of the Prophet?

Pausing until he could command h.. voice, Edward turned over in his mind a dozen different plans and modes of making his presence known to his unconscious relative, but at last he concluded that the most direct way would be the best. Keeping his head concealed in shadow, he applied his mouth to an angle of the port, and, in a low voice, uttered his brother's name.

"Henry! Henry Carlyle!"

The reclining figure started to his feet, his handsome features expressing the height of astonishment and awe.

"What name is that? who calls?" he demanded, in Spanish, at the same time instinctively stretching out his arm to a jewel-headed sabre that hung against the rudder-casing.

"'Tis I—Edward—the brother of Henry Carlyle!"

The Moor took a step towards the window, and stopped, bending forward in an eager but hesitating attitude.

"Edward?" he whispered; "do I dream? yes, his name was Edward. Ah! what memories come over me; and mine —mine was Henry—Henry Carlyle!"

"Listen, then," replied Edward; "'tis no spirit from the dead who is addressing you; 'tis your brother. You remember playing on the beach above Rota; the Moors came upon you and carried you off; 'tis many years since you saw your brother; think you that you would know him if you should see him again?"

"Ha! this is no dream," muttered the Moor to himself; "my brain is clear, and that voice strikes upon my ear as distinctly as if it were a human voice. Surely this must be what the Moors so dread—a visitation—a temptation. Know my brother?" continued the speaker, raising his voice, "know Edward? at once—among ten thousand."

"Look at him, then," and Edward, turning and clinging to the port-sill, thrust his head through the window into the bright lamp-light.

Instantly the gleam of steel flashed upon his eyes. "*Bismillah!* in the name of God," exclaimed the Moor, and stepping forward, he swung his scimitar lightly in the air, and directed a blow full at Edward's defenceless head. Luckily the cabin was low, and the blow was partly arrested by the carlings above, and by the rudder-case at the side, but still, descending with considerable force, the keen blade glanced along the bones of the temple, inflicting a savage-looking wound, from which spouted the blood in torrents.

The Moor did not repeat the stroke, although Edward, somewhat stunned by the unexpected blow, fell forward across the port-sill, and presented a still fairer mark. With an air of increasing astonishment, he stood gazing at the flowing blood, while Edward, recovering himself, but faint and giddy, raised his discolored face, and looked at him with a most reproachful but affectionate glance; "Henry! dear Henry!" he murmured.

"You are not then a *djin?* an *afrite?* a vision of *sheitan?*" eagerly demanded the Moor.

"I am your brother!—flesh and blood—your own twin-brother," replied Edward, dropping his head again, and clutching, with uncertain grasp, upon the side of the port, to keep himself from falling.

Henry—for we may now call him so, at least until we get a more distinctive name—advanced a step, and stretching out his arm, touched his brother's hand just as the relaxing muscles were giving way. The instant that he did so all uncertainty seemed to vanish from his mind. Flinging aside his scimitar, he rapidly passed his arm out of the port, encircled his brother's form, and drew him quickly but gently through the window into the cabin. He stretched him upon the cushions, and then, like one accustomed to wounds, he proceeded to stanch the bleeding, which he easily did by

restoring the divided scalp to its place, and securing it by several folds of the turban that he unwound from his own head. A vessel of water stood within reach. The Moor applied it to his brother's lips. Edward's insensibility was the result rather of the sudden shock to the nervous system, than of loss of blood. It was the slight faintness that even the strongest frames will sometimes feel when wounded, and the taste of the water instantly revived him. Edward sat up, and taking his brother's hand, looked him calmly in the face. Henry kneeled upon the cushions, returned his brother's grasp, and gazed upon him long and steadily.

It was a striking picture—those two brothers, so alike, yet so different—so long separated, and so strangely re-united—as they sat thus, hand in hand, gazing at each other with looks of mingled wonder, curiosity and affection.

At length the Moorish brother spoke, as if in answer to Edward's look; "I thought you were a djin, an evil spirit that is permitted to assume the form and voice of mortals to tempt us to destruction. My companions talk much of them, and they say that the only way to receive them is with a blow of the scimitar, when they will vanish. You are no djin—no spirit—I feel your heart beat—I have seen your blood flow!" and the Moorish brother placed his arm over Edward's neck, and pressed him to his breast.

"But if you are no djin," he exclaimed, suddenly starting and withdrawing his arm, "tell me how it is that you are here? Whence came you? By what means?"

"Listen, dearest Henry," replied Edward, "and I will quiet all your doubts. You shall know how unexpectedly and strangely, but how easily and naturally it happens that I find myself here. And then you shall tell me your story. You must recollect that, although I apprehend nothing of the supernatural in it, your being here is as much a matter of curiosity and wonder to me as my presence can be to you."

Edward ran over the principal circumstances that had conspired to place him in his present position. He spoke of his father; of his own life in England; his recent return to Cadiz, of his relations to Isabel; of the jealousy of Don Diego; of his adventurous visit to the *quinta* of the Guadalete; the chase; his expedient to escape; and his change of position from the stern of the small boat to the rudder of the galley. He spoke of his feelings when his brother's familiar voice

came to his ear—and that voice singing a ballad of his childhood; of his climbing from the rudder to the taffrail; and of the overruling conviction of his brother s identity, that rushed upon him at sight of his features.

The Moor listened to his brother's tale with an expression of increasing tenderness and interest, until Edward came to where he plunged overboard to avoid the felucca, when all doubts seemed at once to vanish, and he again passed his arm around his brother, and gazed in silence into his face. As Edward finished, he deliberately pressed him to his heart, kissed him several times on eyes, cheeks, and hands, and uttering a profession of somewhat stately but hearty terms of endearment, he expressed his sorrow for the hostile attitude he had at first assumed.

"I was thinking of you at the very instant when you spoke," said Henry. "Could I doubt that it was some evil spirit that had come to mock me? But never before did I believe in djins, though the Moors are continually seeing them; and I am sure now I never shall again. But come, you must change your wet clothes; here are dry garments of the Moorish fashion, you need feel none the less like a Christian in them, than if they were made in Cadiz.

"And now, oh son of my mother!" continued Henry, placing the cushion beneath his brother's reclining figure, "you are anxious to hear something of my history; answer me first, however, one question—you have mentioned the name of but one of our parents—What of the other? What of my mother?"

"She is in Heaven!" replied Edward.

The Moorish brother covered his face for a moment with his hand. "God is great!" he exclaimed, raising his head and speaking in a calm voice, but with a slight quivering of the lip that betokened the deep emotion within. "God is great! and thus passes the chief hope of my life. I'll question you further of this some other time. Now, I will tell you my story, for which a few words will suffice.

"Hast ever heard," continued the speaker, "of Hassan Herach?"

"What, the Salee rover? the terror of the seas? the dread of the Spaniards for miles inland? Yes, I have heard of him. I have heard a Spanish mother still her crying infant with his name in the heart of Castile."

"Well, and now you see him," replied Henry, "I am Hassan Herach. Listen, and I will tell you how, by God's will, I came to be so."

But it will be, perhaps, less tedious, to give the substance of Hassan's story than his exact words, and to this purpose we shall devote the commencement of a new chapter.

CHAPTER V.

"LEAVE the determination of our course to the winds," replied Genserie to his pilots when departing from the ports of Barbary upon one of his frequent piratical expeditions to the northern shores of the Mediterranean. "They will conduct us to the guilty coasts whose inhabitants have provoked the justice of Heaven." Genseric was an Arian, and religious hate animated the barbarian monarch and his Vandalic and Moorish followers in their desolating forays upon the coasts of the Italian peninsula and islands, as much as a love of plunder or a thirst for blood. To him succeeded a still more bigoted, ferocious, and piratical race, who, even more than Genseric, imagined themselves the instruments of divine vengeance against the Christians, and the authorized punishers of all who denied the sanctity of the Prophet. For several centuries their corsairs, varying in numbers and in energy with the varying political circumstances of Europe and Barbary, swept the narrow seas of the Mediterranean, and carried terror and dismay to the hearts of all the dwellers by the shore. It was not, however, the littoral towns and villages alone that suffered. Like the great pirate we have mentioned, whose bands for fourteen days and nights revelled amid the despoiled palaces and temples of imperial Rome, the Mohammedan corsairs of Barbary frequently extended their incursions to some distance inland, sacking and burning the villages and even cities, and securing and carrying off their plunder and slaves before a force could be assembled to prevent or punish.

Nor were their depredations confined to the Mediterranean. In 1585, the famous Morat Rais led the way into the Atlantic and plundered the Island of Lancerote, one of the Canaries. Following his example, the Algerine and Neapolitan cruisers frequently passed the Straits of Gibraltar,

while the rovers of Morocco, issuing from their western ports, swept the ocean with unflagging energy from the Cape de Verds to the English Channel. They even extended their depredations to the shores of the Baltic and the Banks of Newfoundland; and upon one occasion visited Iceland, and carried off several hundred captives.

In the present day we can only wonder that such a system of depredation should have been tolerated by the Christian powers of Europe, and that, too, down until within half a century of our own time; but the disgraceful fact is, no doubt, attributable to the jealousies of the great nations, and to their almost continual wars, to which, in addition to the millions of deaths, and vast amount of misery thus directly caused, must be charged the sufferings of hundreds of thousands of both sexes and all ages, who, in consequence of these wars, were allowed to be torn from country and friends, and drag out their miserable existence as slaves among the Christian-hating fanatics of Barbary.

At no time, from the days of Genseric, had the depredations of the corsairs of Morocco been prosecuted with greater energy and boldness, especially upon the coasts of Spain, than during the half century previous to the date of our story. In the days of the Barbarossas and the famous corsairs Drub-devil and Dragut Rais, piracy within the Straits was conducted, it is true, on a grander scale: whole fleets issuing from the ports of Algiers, Tunis and Tripoli, sanctifying, or at least dignifying, their expeditions with the pretensions of regular war. The ports of Morocco, however, were always too small to admit the formation of large fleets, and the exertions of maritime adventurers were necessarily confined to single cruisers, or at most to small squadrons of two or three galleys.

It was upon a visit of one of the corsairs issuing from the famous port of Salee to the coast of Spain, that, as we have said, the young son of the English merchant was seized and carried off. The captain of the galley was renowned for his cruelty and his bitter hatred of the Christians, but there was something in the appearance of Henry Carlyle that touched the latent sensibilities of the old Moor's heart; and instead of ordering him to be stripped of his fine clothes, and confined with the other captives, he took the terrified boy into his cabin, and with unceasing assiduity endeavored for weeks

and months to soothe his distress and to reconcile him to his change of life.

And not without success were the exertions of his captor. Henry was too young and too impressible not to yield himself readily to the influences at work upon him; and before the cruise was half over, he had become quite reconciled to his fate. The Moorish officers were invariably kind to him; as much so for his own sake, as in obedience to the expressed wishes of their grim captain, who had announced his intention of adopting the child as his own son. With the men, Henry soon became a general favorite, making equal progress in their language and their affections. They were delighted with his good looks, his activity and strength, and especially with his religion. Not being a Roman Catholic, they could hardly believe that he was a Christian; while, at the same time, it was clear that he was not a Mohammedan, and therefore a tempting prize to the active proselyting desires of the disciples of the Prophet. This invested him with a degree of interest which for no orthodox Moorish juvenile could have been aroused.

Happily or otherwise, as the reader may think, the child had imbibed no strong prejudices against the Moors. Had he been of Spanish parentage, he would have learned equally to fear and detest them; but his parents were English and Protestant, and what had been excited in his little breast of national and religious animosity, was directed mainly against the Papists of Spain. On the one hand, he had often seen his father's countenance troubled, and his temper aroused at some act of imposture or injustice, some impertinent interference in his business, or some unwarrantable exaction upon his gains; while on the other, his imagination was often excited by his mother's description of the glories of Spain under the Moors, and his sympathies aroused for the unfortunate followers of the Prophet by her glowing stories of the suffering attending their final subjection and expulsion. Dislike of the Spaniards who were around her, added to the strong prejudice entertained in that age by all of her countrymen for a nation that had loaded a fleet with instruments of torture for English heretics, made her sympathize deeply with the former masters of Andalusia, and she loved to sing old Moorish ballads, and to dwell upon the days when the land, in its whole length, was cultivated like a garden—when

Andalusia boasted of its seventy public libraries, and Cordova alone could show its list of over two hundred authors of repute.

Judging from his dress, and other indications, that the wealth of his parents would enable them to exert every influence for the recovery of their child, and that most probably the Sultan himself would be induced to take an interest in the affair, the captain of the corsair, immediately upon the arrival of his galley at Salee, dispatched his prize to a distant, half Berber, half Arabic village, in the mountains of Tedla, where, for two years, he was kept closely concealed. At the end of this period the Moorish captain, having ascertained from the Spanish friars of the Redemption, at Mequinez, that all search for him had been abandoned, he was taken back to Salee, where, for some time, he was kept under the tuition of a pious Mollah. The instructions of the worthy expounder of the Koran were thought essential, inasmuch as his religious education had been sacrificed to the necessity of concealing him from the energetic search of his friends; and he had been allowed to run wild with the boys of a Berber village, that, like a few other places in the mountains of Atlas, was suspected of retaining a remnant of paganism, or still worse, of Christianity.

When sufficiently instructed in the language and doctrines of the Koran, he was taken, in grand procession, to the Mosque, and with the customary ceremonies, confirmed in the true faith. From this time he accompanied his so-called father in his voyages, and was engaged in numerous adventures off the coast of Spain and Portugal, which it is not necessary here to relate. He hated the Spaniards, and he hated Papists—while he had just enough Mohammedanism to overlay his unformed notions of Protestant Christianity, and to make him sceptical in all matters of religious belief.

A few books that fell into his hands, and the occasional conversation of two or three English slaves, kept up some recollection of his mother's tongue, although in time he lost so much of it that he could by no means express his thoughts as fluently in English as he could in Spanish, which then, as now, owing to the expulsion of the Moriscos and Jews from Spain and their settlement in Barbary, was almost as common as Arabic in the seaport towns.

One recollection, however, never faded—the recollection

of his mother, Language, religion, country, all grew dim and distant on the waste of memory, but the image of his mother retained its brightness. He had cherished it in his heart of hearts.

"Why, then," demanded Edward, breaking in upon his brother's story. "Why did you never return to her? Why did you never seek to know whether she still lived?"

"'Twas impossible," replied Hassan; "though ever loved and trusted, I have always been closely watched. I soon found that not only my adopted father, but all the Moors around me were jealous of even the slightest recollection of my early boyhood."

"But now—here—are you not master?" demanded Edward.

"The Sultan in his court at Mequinez has not more unlimited and despotic power," replied Hassan. "My crew obey me as the veriest slaves Upon the death of my Moorish father, some three years since, I succeeded to the command of this galley, and since then never on the decks of this craft, aye, or even in the streets of Salee, has a breath of opposition dared raise itself to command of mine. But still my Christian origin is known, and although no one dreams of any Christian sympathies on my part, yet I have ever felt that I could take no steps to ascertain the existence of my parents without at once arousing suspicion; and suspicion of my motives once excited, I should have been powerless. I should have sunk at once into the class of renegades—the most miserable, helpless, and closely watched subjects of the Sultan."

"But did you never meet with captives from Cadiz?" inquired Edward.

"Often," replied Hassan, "but never with one who could give me any account of my family, and not one to whom I dared intrust a message.

"No," he continued, after a pause, "it would have been risking too much. I am rais or captain of this galley, and my true policy has been to strengthen myself in the affections and admiration of those I command, until my motives of action should become questionless, and my will should become law. Then the means of opening a communication with family or country would be within my control. Praise be to Allah, that time has nearly arrived. My presence here to-night in these waters is a marked deviation from the plan

of the cruise laid out for the galley. I made it in hopes of picking up some boat off the mouth of the bay, from whose crew I might perchance learn something of the news from Cadiz. Little did I dream that my change of course would be rewarded by the recovery of a brother. *Allah Akbar! Allah Akbar!* God is great. Oh, thou son of my mother!" and Hassan again threw his arms affectionately around the reclining form of his brother.

Starting to his feet, Hassan, as we shall in future call him, looked out from the stern port, athwart which the first faint gleams of morning were beginning to dart.

"Pardon me, O thou newly found half of my heart," he exclaimed, turning to his brother, "I thought not how swiftly time was passing. You need both food and rest."

Saying this, he unlocked the door opening into the forward cabin, and clapping his hands thrice, in a few moments a negro, habited in Moorish garb, drew up the heavy wooden latch and looked in. Holding the half-open door in hand, he was in the act of shuffling off his loose yellow slippers preparatory to entering, when his motions were arrested by the sight of Edward reclining upon the cushions. His big eyes dilated with wonder as they turned from one brother to the other. An impatient gesture from his master made him enter and close the door.

"Selim," said the rais, speaking in Arabic, "you see my brother—no matter how or when he came—I wish his coming to remain secret. See that no one enters this apartment; I intrust his secret to your charge, and, mark you, if a rumor of it reaches the men—" And here the captain made a significant gesture with his hand to his neck.

Selim bowed his head submissively.

"Worse for you!" continued the captain, "you know that I am a sorcerer."

"*Allah alem!* God knows," exclaimed Selim.

"Yes, and you know, too; or you think that you do. Look at those books."

Selim rolled his eyes over the table and shuddered.

"Well, if a word of the presence of my brother here escapes you, I shall not cut off your head, or bow-string you, or burn your tongue out, but—how would you like to be turned into a white man and a Christian?"

"Allah forbid!" exclaimed Selim, raising both hands to

Heaven, and rapidly repeating the short formula of Mohammedan faith.

"Go, then, and may your lips be sealed with the signet of silence. Go, bring food, and prepare some coffee—or stay, perhaps my brother would like a cup of the great drink of the Chinese. Bring hot water and the vessels for tea."

In a few minutes, Selim returned with a small silver urn, and a set of diminutive cups, not much larger than thimbles. Placing them upon the table, he stepped back with a low salaam, and squatted quietly by the door, while his master, producing a small canister of tea—an article then, as now, in greater favor with the Moors than with any Christian people, except the English, although, of course, less in vogue then with either, than in the present day—and turning some of it directly into the urn of hot water, proceeded to add a quantity of coarse white sugar, stirring the while, and pouring in the sugar until the beverage was nearly of the consistency of a syrup.

Half a dozen tiny cups, such as among the Maroquiens to this day are the fashion, filled with this beverage, with a few rolls of wheaten pancake made thin as a wafer, and fried in a mixture of honey and butter, sufficed for the young Englishman. It was not much that he ate or drunk, but it was enough to restore his strength, and to reassure the staring Selim, dissipating his doubts as to the corporeal nature of the young stranger, and enabling him to assist, with a trembling hand, in a more thorough dressing of Edward's wounds.

Breakfast having been despatched and the operation of carefully dressing the wound finished, Edward retired to one of the couches; the curtains were drawn over the opening to the recess, and the Moorish captain went on deck to superintend the alterations in the sails, rendered necessary by the increasing force and more northerly direction of the wind.

All day the swift galley flew before the stiff favoring breeze, until, just at sunset, the look-out caught sight of the famous "*Sma Hassan*," a lofty tower that, peering far above the battlements of Rabat, serves as a landmark to vessels approaching the entrance to the river dividing that town from Salee. It was too late, even had the tide served, to think of crossing the bar, at the mouth of the river, and the crew of the galley were compelled to heave-to about midnight,

over a small insulated sand-bank, and to cast over a grapnel to keep themselves from drifting into the line of breakers.

Having secured his vessel, and prepared everything for sweeping her into the harbor, at early dawn, the Moorish captain retired into his cabin. A long consultation ensued between the brothers, as to the course that should be adopted to save Edward from being claimed by any of the several owners of the galley, as a slave.

"I could save you," said Hassan, "by an acknowledgment of our relationship, and by a resolute exertion of my influence and power, but I could hardly save you from the annoyances of curiosity and bigotry. Besides, I should not prefer to risk my influence just now—we may need it all for your ultimate escape."

It was decided, therefore, that Edward should keep close in the cabin until night, and then landing, set out at once for the royal city of Mequinez, about sixty miles from Salee.

"Selim shall accompany you as servant and interpreter. He will do all the talking—if spoken to, you must affect to be dumb. You will proceed directly to the house of Abdallah Ibn Asken, a merchant, to whom I will give you a letter. He is an acquaintance of my boyhood; I have not seen him since I have become a man, but I have been in correspondence with him, and have more than once been of service to him in some delicate negotiations with Christians, wherein he dare not trust his countrymen or the Jews. I know that I can rely upon his disposition to serve me. He will receive you, and in a few days I will come up to Mequinez and make further arrangements for your safety."

Agreeably to this plan, the galley at daylight was swept in through the breakers on the bar, by the full force of forty oars, and carried up the stream, where it was beached, as if by accident, some distance beyond the line of the water-gate. The prisoners, among whom were Don Diego and his companions, were taken in custody by the officers of the chief kaid of the slaves, hurried ashore amid the jeers and revilings of the mob, and thrust into the large vaults or casements constructed in the thickness of the city walls, The cargo was landed, the galley-slaves sent on shore, and the galley, high and dry at low water, remained, almost deserted by her crew, on the sand.

All was quiet, and the night well advanced when Edward

drew himself out from his hiding-place, beneath one of the couches, and, assisted by his brother, lowered himself without difficulty from one of the stern-posts to the ground. Selim was in waiting at a little distance; and in a few moments they were joined by the rais.

Once clear of the galley, there was no immediate danger to apprehend; the party moved rapidly along the water-wall, until they reached the entrance to the dry ditch defending the town, on the land side. Passing along this for some distance, they scrambled up the covered way, and gaining the crest of the glacis, made their way through thickets of cactus, and then over a large flat table of rock, until they stood beneath the arches of an old Roman aqueduct, about a mile from Salee, and along which ran the road to Mequinez.

At a little distance were picketed two mules. The rais assisted his brother to mount. "Remember," he said, kissing his hand, "keep silence, and you are safe. Go, you are in the hand of God."

CHAPTER VI.

It was morning at Mequinez. The sun was just peering above the snow-covered peaks of the Djebel Tedla, and sloping across the intervening valleys; his beams fell, like a shower of gold, upon the minarets of the mosques, and the domes and battlements of the royal palace,

This latter building, or rather assemblage of buildings, was situated at the Southern side of the city, and consisted of an immense number of rectangular edifices of one story, surrounding courts and gardens, mingled with square *cobahs* or store-houses for arms and munitions of war. The whole of the vast area was environed by a solid wall more than twenty feet high, and four miles in circumference. In the centre stood *El harem*—or "the forbidden"—an oblong building, inclosing a sunken garden, half a mile in length, and of a proportionate width. The walls were, as in the other edifices, of *tapia*, or mortar moulded in wooden cases. No windows varied the plain surface of the outside, the light being admitted to the long, narrow, lofty rooms, only through the doors opening upon the corridors and courts surrounding the

gardens. An elevated wooden bridge, covered with lattice-work, supported on arches and resting upon slender wooden columns, divided the principal garden, and formed a means of communication between the opposite sides of the harem. In this latticed covered-way it was the custom for the female inmates of the harem to pass much of their time, and especially to assemble when the Emperor gave audience in the garden below.

Around the harem and communicating with it, by countless intricate passages and courts, was, as we have said, an immense number of buildings. An accurate description, however, of the whole, is by no means necessary to our purpose; suffice it to say that the ruins still existing are sufficient to verify the assertions of several Christian writers, who saw it in the days of Muley Ismael, that it was one of the most magnificent palaces in the world—magnificent, not from its external architecture, which was nothing but one unvarying system of rectangular, whitewashed uniformity, or from the beauty of its internal finish—Moorish taste and skill having sadly degenerated since the days when men traced the beautiful arabesques of the Alhambra—but magnificent from its extent—from the magnitude and number of its tesselated rooms, its paved courts, its gardens, and its fountains.

It was morning at Mequinez. In a large court communicating with the garden of the harem were assembled all the dignitaries of the court. A body of black troops lined each side of the square. Four stalwart negroes lounged at a little distance from the archway by which the Sultan was expected to enter. These were the executioners, the invariable attendants at a "*meshourah*" or royal audience, who at a look from their master, could seize the unfortunate subject of the monarch's wrath, and tossing him into the air, let him fall so as to break any prescribed number of bones, or to kill him outright.

In front of the arch were gathered the officers of the court, the chief dignitaries of the city, mingled with kaids and lieutenant-kaids from Morocco and Fez, and bashaws from the provinces of Soos and Tefilet. At a little distance a group of four or five Jews in black skull-cap and bornoose, covered in deprecating attitude beneath the fierce looks of the negro guard.

A striking contrast was that between the insolent air of these black barbarians from the further side of the Sahara, and the subdued voices and anxious looks of the Maroquien courtiers.

"May God prolong the life of the Sultan," whispered a bashaw to the kaid of the gate. "Hast thou heard in what mood it has placed his majesty to rise this morning?"

"May the Sultan's life be prolonged," replied the kaid. "A eunuch just whispered me that it had pleased our Lord the Shereef to rise with his sword in his tooth."

And the word passed through the groups of anxious officials that something had gone wrong with his majesty during the night, and that probably more than one head would roll from its shoulders in token of the Sultan's displeasure.

The gates were thrown open, and the Sultan was seen on horseback in the middle of a small court, beneath an umbrella of red silk, which was supported on a long pole by a stalwart negro. The natural ugliness of this umbrella-bearer was heightened by innumerable scars, the marks of the scimiter with which his services had been frequently rewarded when his master could find no one else upon whom to vent his wrath. Two or three negroes, with half a dozen renegade Christian boys, were in attendance, but preserving an unusually respectful distance.

Muley Ismael, the sixth monarch of the dynasty founded upon the subversion of the Oataze by the Shereefs of Tefilet, a family so named because claming descent from the Prophet, was at this time about seventy years of age. Forty years of his life he had passed upon a throne, which, by his talents and energy, he had consolidated out of the petty kingdoms of Soos, Morocco, Fez and Tefilet. Of a middle size—his frame, owing to his extreme temperance, was still vigorous and active. He could mount his horse by vaulting. without assistance, and could wield his scimiter, if not on the field of battle against his enemies, at least in his own court, with a degree of skill and force that was perfectly satisfactory to his courtiers and friends. His complexion was very dark, his mother having been a woman from Soudan, but his features inclined more to the Moorish than to the negro style of face. His eyes, black and piercing, sparkled with intelligence, or gleamed with the most ferocious malice. His mouth was wide, and generally distorted by a sardonic grin, while

his toothless gums added to his disagreeable expression, which was somewhat relieved, however, by a snow-white beard. His dress was a plain white haick, beneath which was a green caftan, and a pair of short wide trousers of woollen. Around his waist he wore a silken sash, and a Morocco belt studded with jewels, from which depended the scabbard of a diamond-hilted scimiter. To the terror of the courtiers it was noticed that the color of this sash was yellow, a sure indication that the Sultan was in no pleasant humor. Yellow slippers covered his feet, and a voluminous turban of fine linen surrounded a high-peaked *fez*.

The instant the gates were thrown open, the Sultan, instead of moving forward with majestic tranquillity at a pace that would have allowed his umbrella-bearer to keep up with him, struck his spurs into his horse, and dashed through the arch-way into the court of audience at full speed. As he passed the gates, his horse swerved a little, bringing his majesty's foot slightly in contact with the dress of one of the gate-keepers. The Sultan threw himself back in the saddle, the powerful Moorish bit jerking the horse to his haunches, and holding for an instant his fore feet suspended in the air. Like a gleam of light, the imperial scimiter descended upon the head of the unlucky porter and felled him to the earth. The next instant the snorting barb leaped beneath the touch of the tremendous Moorish rowels, right amid the trembling group assembled in the court. And now was presented one of those singular scenes which, when occurring in authentic history, we read with sentiments of the most profound incredulity, forgetting that the possessor of perfectly despotic power is almost necessarily a madman.

"Long life and health to Sidi! May God preserve Sidi!" shouted with one accord the courtiers, at the same time prostrating themselves to the ground, and crouching and cringing around the Sultan, endeavoring to touch his feet or to kiss his garments or the trappings of his horse. The Sultan, however, kept his horse in motion and his scimiter whirling, and it was with no small expenditure of agility that his courtiers contrived to pay their customary salutations, and yet to preserve their bodies from the horse's hoofs or their necks from the steel. As it was, several turbans were already cut through, and a dozen backs were stained with blood, when suddenly the Sultan checked his horse, and sheathing his scimiter with

a growl of rage, he passed his hands into the folds of his sash and drew out a paper.

"Traitors," he shouted, glaring round upon his panting and terrified court. "Dogs! whose work is this? Who of you has dared to sell himself to the Berber!" and the old monarch shook the paper with convulsive energy.

"Read this," he exclaimed to an officer who held the office of chief kaid of the gate.

The kaid advanced, took the paper, and after kissing the hem of the imperial haick, he read in a loud voice as follows:

"To the powerful Muley Ismael, Emperor of Morocco, Soos, and Tefilet, whom God preserve in the paths of justice and mercy. Know that thy demand for more tribute than the free Amazerg of the hills has of his own accord consented to pay, is unjust. Know also that thy design to ravage the country of the Ait Amoor is known to me. Be warned in time and let there be peace between us. I fear you not, and wish you well, in token whereof I pin this paper with my dagger to your pillow, and not to your heart.

"CASBIN EL SUBAH."

"What think you?" demanded the Sultan, when the kaid had finished; "whence comes this? Who pinned that paper to my pillow?"

"May God forever preserve Sidi, but I know not," replied the trembling kaid.

"Think you it was the Berber chieftain himself?"

"God knows," replied the kaid, falling upon his knees.

"God knows, but you do not," growled the Sultan; "and yet you are kaid of the gates."

Muley Ismael glared around upon his court with the look of a tiger selecting a victim, and then raising his finger, the four negroes darted upon the prostrate and grovelling form of the unfortunate officer.

"God is great! and there is no God but God! may he lengthen the life of Sidi," exclaimed the kaid; but with the words in his mouth, his body was whirled aloft on the extended arms of the gigantic negroes, and then dashed head first with mortal force upon the marble pavement.

The Sultan stared for a moment, with a grin of maniacal rage distorting his toothless mouth, upon the lifeless body of the kaid, while the courtiers began to elevate their voices

in expressions of admiration of his justice and goodness, and in wishes for his long life and prosperity. One Moor, however, of a dignified mien, and of a complexion that would have compared for clearness and whiteness with that of the inhabitants of Northern Europe, stood a little apart in silence. He either could not, or would not, join in the sycophantic plaudits that were beginning to arise from all quarters of the court.

As the eyes of the monarch turned from the body of the kaid, they fell upon the silent figure of the Moor.

"Hah!" exclaimed the Sultan, "Abdallah ibn Asken! what thinkest thou of the justice of the Shereef?"

To approve or disapprove, in answer to such a question, it was well known to be attended with equal danger, and for a moment Abdallah stood without making any reply.

With a deep-drawn yell of concentrated passion, Muley Ismael spurred towards him. "Dog! son of a Christian!—you, a descendant of the Ommeyah of Andalusia!" he shouted, and, raising his sword, let it fall with full force upon the head of the Moor, who, as the blade descended, received it without moving from his tracks. Luckily, the thick turban afforded a partial defense, but still the keen steel cleft the scalp, and, glancing, inflicted a deep wound in the shoulder. The sword itself, by the force of the blow, was wrenched from the Sultan's hand, and flew out some distance on the pavement.

Quietly Abdallah turned, took a few steps, picked up the sword and deliberately wiped the bloody blade upon his haick. He then advanced to the Emperor, who sat motionless upon his horse, and presenting the hilt, bowed his head.

"God is God," exclaimed Abdallah, "and I submit to my fate at his hands, and at the hands of the Shereef,"*

Muley Ismael, although one of the most suspicious, irritable and cruel tyrants that ever filled a throne, had his moments of generosity. From the extreme of passion it was no uncommon thing for him to pass to the extreme of kindness and condescension.

Receiving the scimitar, he returned it to its sheath, and then, unbuckling the belt, handed it back to Abdallah.

"Receive this," said the Sultan, "oh worthy descendant

*This is no invention. The incident actually occurred, and the whole scene, as described, is much within the bounds of historic truth.

of the royal Ommeyah; may God restore their dynasty to the throne of Cordova;—receive it as a token of our satisfaction that there is at least one brave and honest man in our court."

Abdallah bowed himself to the stirrup of the Sultan, and kissed his foot. Muley Ismael placed his hand upon the Moor's head, and raising it, exclaimed in a loud voice, "Long life to Abdallah ibn Asken, Chief Kaid of the gates!"

The tongues of the courtiers were loosened. The smiles of the Sultan having returned, they felt secure of their heads for another day. Shouts of delight at the goodness and greatness of God, and at the wisdom, and mercy, and justice of the Shereef, rose upon the air, and circled the arched corridors of the harem, and penetrated even to a distant square, where were lying the lifeless bodies of four women, who, without the slightest ground for suspicion, had been ordered to execution upon the first discovery of the Berber's note.

The Emperor made a gesture for silence—dismounting, he took a seat upon a projecting angle of the archway, while his principal officers squatted upon the ground around him. The mind of the Sultan was too busy with the affair of the Berber chieftain to permit his attention to the usual business of the day; and he eagerly demanded of his ministers their advice as to the best means of reaching a rebellious subject who was not content with defying the imperial power from his stronghold in the hills, but who, as was evident from the note and the dagger, maintained relations with members of the court, and perhaps even mingled with the inmates of the palace.

"Who has seen this chieftain of the Beni Mozarg?" demanded Muley Ismael.

Several officers asserted their knowledge of the Berber's person.

"He is a tall man, of about forty years of age," said the Bashaw of Fez.

"No; he is a little, old man of seventy," interrupted the Bashaw of Morocco, who was a Shelloch, or in other words, a Berber of the tribes inhabiting the Southern Atlas.

"He is neither," interposed Kaid Hammed Burosch, who was a Reefien, and descended from the Berbers of the Northern coast. "He is a very young man, almost black, his mother being from Soudan."

"No!" exclaimed a burly negro, the kaid of the gardens,

"he is white as the whitest town Moor—white as a Christian. I saw him once as I was coming into the gate of the city; he was riding out with a number of Berbers of the Ait Amore and some Arabs of the plains. No; he is white, with fair hair; the Beni Mozarg are the whitest of the tribes; you can tell them in a moment from all other Berbers who throng the *socco* on market days."

"'Tis strange," exclaimed the Sultan; "this fellow and his tribe live less than half a day's ride from our gates, and his name for the last three years has been extending through the whole length of the land, and yet it seems impossible to ascertain whether he is young or old, tall or short, black or white!

"But," he continued, "I will visit his stronghold myself. Let everything be prepared for an excursion in the mountains. See that ten thousand of my black troops are in readiness, and collect five thousand horsemen from Tetuan, and as many more from Tedla. They are all Berbers, and it will be good policy to use them up against their kindred of the Ait Amore."

"But," interposed the Bashaw, Hammed ibn Bomba, who held a post equivalent to minister of war, and to whom the king's order was addressed, "it is useless to march into the hills without artillery, and the kaid of artillery, Renegado Hassan Jones lies"—at the point of death, the Bashaw would have said, but death being a word that must never be mentioned in the presence of the Sultan, he paraphrased it by—"lies awaiting the fulfilment of his destiny."

"And is there no Christian slave or renegado who can supply his place?"

"Not one," replied the Bashaw. "Please God that some of the corsairs may bring in a competent Christian soon."

"Publish an order," exclaimed the Sultan, that all the slaves brought into Salee, without exception, be sent up to Mequinez, and order all the cruisers now in port to get to sea immediately. Let them capture a Christian who understands the management of big guns at once. See that I am obeyed. On your head be it."

Rising, the Sultan broke up the council, and, with a wave of his hand, dismissed without a word the crowd of dignitaries from different districts of the empire, some of whom had been waiting for weeks for an opportunity to inquire the reasons

for which they had been commanded to present themselves at court.

The Sultan mounted his horse, and, accompanied by his negroes and a few of his most intimate courtiers, he set out to view the progress of the building that was constantly going on under his direction.

In different parts of the palace ten thousand Christian captives of all nations, but mainly Spaniards, Italians and French, were busily engaged in preparing mortar, sawing timber, clearing away rubbish, and carrying loads of building material on their backs, while as many Moors were superintending and directing their labor, or executing the finer architectural detail of the work, Many were engaged in tearing down buildings that had been but recently erected; the organ of constructiveness, which must have been large in the head of this singular old tyrant, being about equally balanced by a passion for destroying. It was a common saying among Moors of the day, "that were all the houses standing that he had built and torn down, there would have been enough to make a street from Mequinez to Fez."

We must do him the justice, however, to relate that he himself assigned what he doubtless considered a very good and sufficient reason for his propensity to destroy and rebuild. His architectural expenditures cost him nothing—they all came in the shape of forced contributions in kind from his subjects. One bashaw pillaged his district of lime and timber, another of grain and cattle for the support of the workmen, and so on, not a province escaping the most harassing exactions.

"And I do this," said the politic tyrant to an English ambassador, "because my people are like a bag full of rats; unless I keep shaking the bag they will gnaw their way out."

CHAPTER VII.

ABDALLAH IBN ASKEN was a native of Fez. Descended from a noble family who had fled from Spain some time after the victorious banners of Ferdinand had been planted upon the walls of Grenada, the mind of Abdallah had been early imbued with the prejudices and feelings that even still are to

be found, though in a less degree, among those Moors who can trace their descent back to the polished courtiers of the Ommeyah and Abencerrages.

Upon finishing his studies under the direction of a celebrated talbe, or doctor of theology, Hadji Ben Nasser, he devoted three or four years to reading in the great library at Fez. Here he found a number of works by Arabic writers, on theology, rhetoric, philosophy, astronomy and geography, besides many translations from ancient Greek and Latin authors—some of whose productions, in their original languages, are forever lost to the civilized world, but may yet be recovered in their Arabic versions from the manuscript treasures of the Moorish mosques.

It was, however, the history of the Mohammedan dominion in Spain that chiefly excited Abdallah's interest. More than all, he loved to pore over the stories and ballads of the days of the Ommeyah, from which royal family he claimed a direct descent. As may be supposed, with a mind thus raised above the degraded African civilization by which he was surrounded, and to some extent emancipated from the religious prejudices that the bigoted Ben Nasser and his Christian-hating compeers would have gladly infused, he willlngly obeyed an order to attach himself to an embassy which in the first years of Muley Ismael's reign, was sent to the court of Spain. A few years afterward a second opportunity was afforded him to travel into Christian lands upon the occasion of the embassy of Bashaw Perez to the court of England.

Upon returning to Morocco, Abdallah, instead of taking to the law, for which he had been educated, or to the precarious and dangerous business of a courtier, turned his attention to mercantile affairs, in the course of which he was compelled to make several visits to Timbuctoo and Jennie on the one hand, and the ports of Leghorn and Marseilles on the other.

The result of his travels was a freedom from prejudice, great knowledge of the world, and the acquisition of numerous European tastes, habits and notions. Externally, to his own countrymen, he was a grave, devout Mussulman; but at heart he was an unbeliever in the Prophet, and a scoffer at the barbarous customs and ignorant prejudices of his countrymen. Another result of his travels was the acquisition of a fortune, and with it the jealous watchfulness of the Sultan, who sel-

dom suffered any of his subjects, against whom there was a suspicion of wealth, to escape the ordeal of the wooden djellabeah, a mode of squeezing money from reluctant capitalists then, as it has been ever since, very much in vogue with the Maroquien Court. The wooden djellabeah consists simply of two wide planks connected by large screws. Between these planks the suspected wretch is placed, and the screws are turned until the confession of his secret hoards is forced from his lips. *

Although concealing all evidences of his gains, Abdallah had incurred suspicion, and his mercantile affairs were suddenly brought to a close by an order to repair to Mequinez. Here he was assigned a house just outside the palace, at an exorbitant rent, by the Sultan himself, but no further efforts at extortion were made by the capricious tyrant, and he was allowed to settle down in undisturbed repose in his new home. Policy, however, dictated that he should frequently show himself at Muley Ismael's morning receptions, and it was at one of these, as we have just seen, that he attracted the Sultan's attention, and found himself suddenly promoted to the responsible office of kaid of the gates.

The blood flowing from the deep cuts made by the imperial hand crimsoned the white garments of the new kaid. He grew faint, and, as the Sultan rode off, he was compelled to accept the support of his inferior officers and assistants, who flocked around him with their congratulations upon the imperial favor.

A dozen turbans were at his service for bandages, and a dozen hands ready to apply them. Aided by the kaid of fountains and the kaid of the stables, and followed by a crowd of courtiers and officers, the new kaid of the gates passed through the gardens and courts until he reached the great city gate of the palace, close by which stood his own house. Here he dismissed his attendants, who would gladly have availed themselves of the opportunity to enter and examine the interior of a dwelling which rumor had already begun to indicate as the residence of an earthly *houri*—hand-

* The most horrible tortures are resorted to for forcing confession of hidden wealth. The victim is put into a slow oven, or kept standing for weeks in a wooden dress. Splinters are forced between the flesh and the nails of the fingers. Two fierce cats are put alive into his wide trousers; and the breasts of his women are pinched with pincers. Young children have sometimes been squeezed to death in the arms of a powerful man before the eyes of their parents.—*Hay's Western Barbary.*

somer by far than the most heavenly-minded follower of the Prophet had ever dreamed of.

Abdallah drew a wooden pass-key from his girdle and opened the door. He had just strength to close it behind him and totter across the *skeffa*, or narrow hall, into the open *patio*, or court. This court was about twenty feet long, with two narrow rooms on either hand, and at the side opposite the entrance, an arched passage-way from side to side, dividing the first patio from a larger one beyond.

In the centre of the court sat an old negress busily engaged in heaping up a pile of cooscoosoo, the national dish of Barbary, and one for which no Moor—and for the matter of that, no Christian who has once tried it—ever loses a relish. Wetting her hand in a pitcher of water placed by her side, she seized a handful of wheaten flour, and carefully rolling it up into little round grains, by rubbing it in an earthen bowl, she tossed it into a sieve made of sheep-skin pierced with holes. The coarser grains were by this means separated and thrown back into the bowl. A smaller sieve separated the finer grains, leaving the medium sizes smooth, round and uniform as shot, to be added to the rapidly growing pile. As she worked, she amused herself by singing several doleful songs in her native language, occasionally stopping and looking up at a young man who sat in the arched doorway—the only aperture for air or light—of one of the side rooms, and who seemed to have no other amusement than to watch her operations.

He was young, about twenty-four or twenty-five years, habited in a common woollen djellebeah, with a turban which, encircling his head without any cap, seemed more like a bandage for a wounded scalp than like the graceful headgear of the Moor. His complexion was light, although not lighter than that frequently seen in the Moorish countenance when not tinged by an infusion of negro blood, or by constant exposure to the sun and air. It is, however, unnecessary for us to go into a minute description of his person or dress.

"Yah! yah! I wonder what made him dumb," muttered the fat Fatima Laboo, in Arabic; "he looks as if he could talk—perhaps he talk too much, and Sultan cut his tongue out. Yah! he's good looking—wonder how Xaripha like him when he came in last night?—she stood long time at the

lattice looking down here. Yah! yah! I hear a noise up there—guess she's there now."

At this moment Abdallah tottered into the court—pale, trembling with his garments crimsoned with blood. The young man started forward to support him, while Fatima jumping to her feet, as nimbly as her obesity would permit, rushed wildly round the court, shouting to Allah, and Obih, and Xaripha, for help.

The young man, with ready and vigorous grasp, supported Abdallah to the carpeted door-step, and placed him upon the cushions from which he himself had just risen. As he looked up from assisting the wounded kaid, his eyes were startled by a vision of surpassing loveliness. A young girl, followed by several female slaves, rushed into the patio from beneath the arches of the gallery.

"Father! father!" she cried, throwing her arms round Abdallah; "what is this? Blood! oh, father, they have murdered you!"

"Not so," replied Abdallah; "not so bad as that, Xaripha. Be not frightened—'tis but a scratch, a mere cut. I am a little faint now; but it will pass."

Xaripha, dropping her father's hand, without a word, flew out of the patio. In a moment she was back again with a small vial, from which she proceeded to pour a few drops into a cup of water. The draught restored the strength of the kaid; he sat up and affectionately placed his hand upon the arm of Xaripha.

"'Tis a precious recipe, that of the old sage of Cordova," he said; "and truly, child, have you compounded it. I knew not that your medicine was so efficacious."

"The herbs composing it are powerful," replied Xaripha, "and I mixed them according to the recipe in the handwriting of our great ancestor, El Hakem."

"True, child, but I had nearly forgotten that we had the recipe. 'Twas well that I intrusted it to your care. It has quite restored my strength. We will now examine this scratch, with which it has pleased the Sultan to mark my appointment to office."

Xaripha despatched the slaves in various directions for water, bandages, and salves, and proceeded at once with her own hands to disclose the gaping wounds, to staunch the welling blood, and to apply the medicated dressings with a

degree of skill which, in that day, could hardly have been surpassed by the best surgeons of Europe, and which indicated that with the blood of the Ommeyah had been transmitted a portion, at least, of the medical science of those days, when flourished an Averrhoes and an Abenzoar.

So absorbed in her pious duties was the fair Moorish girl that she heeded not the presence of the young man, who quietly aided her. He, on the other hand, uttered no word; but gazing with all his eyes at the vision of beauty which had so suddenly burst upon him, he felt each barrier to his heart give way, and his whole soul fill with a rushing, eddying, almost oppressive sense of female loveliness. The glowing charms of the unveiled face, the bare arms and shoulders, the unslippered feet, and the suggested graces—half revealed, half concealed by the short pliant basquina, and the thin semi-transparent chemisette—overpowered, bewildered, stupified him. His steady gaze of intense, soul-absorbing interest and admiration attracted the attention of Abdallah.

"Xaripha," said her father, speaking in Italian, "you are unveiled—you forget the presence of this young man."

"How could I think of anything, father, but you, when I saw you from the lattice, and heard the shrieks of Fatima? As for this young man, I like his appearance, and I mind not showing myself unveiled before him."

"You may not mind it, for I have not trained you in the notions of our people, but he may think it strange—besides, I am anxious that no one should know of your growing beauty."

"But this poor young man is deaf and dumb, and he looks not like one who would betray any confidence," replied Xaripha.

"Dumb, so far as I know; but much I misdoubt me if he cannot hear. He certainly understands Spanish, if not Arabic. He has a very familiar look to me. 'Tis strange, but still it might well be—he surely looks like it—"

"Like what, dearest father?" demanded Xaripha.

"Like a Christian."

Xaripha started, and threw a glance of increased interest at the young man.

"You have not told me how he comes here, and to what purpose," said Xaripha.

"I know nothing of him," replied Abdallah, "except that

he arrived from Salee last night, accompanied by a black, and bearing a letter from my good friend, Hassan Herach, whom I have not seen since he was a boy, but with whom I have ever maintained a correspondence, and whom may God preserve in the ways of health and safety. His note entreated me to receive this young man into my house, and to conceal him from some imminent danger, which he, Hassan, would explain to me when he should arrive in Mequinez. The black informed me that the young man is deaf and dumb, and that his master, Hassan, values his life more than he does his own."

"This Hassan Herach then will soon be here?" said Xaripha.

"I am afraid not," replied her father. "The Sultan issued an order to-day for every cruiser to put to sea at once, and Hassan will be compelled to obey."

The position of Edward, during this conversation, was peculiarly embarassing. Perfectly familiar with the Italian, he could not avoid hearing and understanding every word that passed between the speakers; and the very precaution they had taken to prevent his comprehending them in case he was only shamming deafness—that of speaking in Italian, rather than in Arabic—was the very means of betraying their thoughts. Several times was he prompted to speak, and avow his Christian character, but the parting injunctions of his brother, and the warnings of Selim, together with his own well-founded apprehensions as to the reception such an avowal would meet with in the house of a Moor, restrained him.

The conversation between father and daughter flowed on, reverting into the Arabic tongue, until a few indignant exclamations from Xaripha brought an expression of caution from her father.

"Hush! hush!" he excaimed. "Speak Italian—our slaves are faithful, but Moorish walls understand Arabic, and a small word will weigh against a man's head."

The conversation being continued in Italian, the young Englishman was again made an unwilling listener. Abdallah described the scene at the audience, and bitterly lamented his unexpected elevation to the office of chief kaid of the gates.

"And now," said he, "my every motion will be watched

more closely than before—much I fear that it will, for a long time, prevent the execution of our cherished design; and yet I dare not refuse it."

"Oh, father!" affectionately exclaimed Xaripha, throwing her arm around his neck; "give up your fortune and let us fly! 'Tis only the money that keeps us—without that, we can escape at once, and surely we can find some way of living in that noble land of the Englishman, where you say the Sultan cannot wrong the meanest man in property or life."

As Xaripha spoke, her eye flashed, her bosom heaved, and her round supple form grew erect and rigid with the tension of swelling emotions.

"Hush! hush, Xaripha!" interposed her father, "you forget we are not alone, and much I misdoubt the deafness of this young man."

"Pardon me," exclaimed Edward, advancing from a corner of the room into which he had withdrawn. "Pardon me, and have confidence in me—notwithstanding I have abused your confidence in this—I am no Moor; I am a Christian and an Englishman."

The announcement excited an exclamation of pleased surprise from Xaripha; but it was received by her father with the usual imperturable gravity and composure of Moorish manners.

"Strange," replied Abdallah, "that I, who have consorted so much with Christians of all nations, should have been deceived for an instant. But now you have told us what you are, tell us whence and wherefore you come."

Encouraged by the liberal sentiments that had fallen from father and daughter, and by the deep insight into their characters, positions and designs, which their private conversation had enabled him to make, Edward sketched rapidly. but fully the principal circumstances that had conspired to bring him into his present position, concealing only the relationship between himself and the famous Hassan Herach.

The deepest interest was manifested by both father and daughter during the young Englishman's recital of his adventures. The conviction of the entire truth of the story rested upon the minds of both, and Abdallah mingled, with his expressions of sympathy, assurances of his assistance and protection.

"I would serve you for your own sake," he said, "still

more would I serve you for the sake of your country and countrymen—still more would I do so for the sake of Hassan Herach, to whom I am under obligations, and to whom I mainly look for aid in carrying out a cherished design. May Allah enable him to aid me."

"But tell me," he continued, rising from the cushions upon which he had been reclining, to retire to his sleeping couch within the inner court, "tell me why it is that Hassan Herach takes such an interest in your fate?"

"Ah, that I will leave Hassan himself to explain when he comes," replied Edward.

"Tell me," exclaimed Xaripha, in a low voice, and turning back to the threshold of the door, "tell me, was that Spanish maiden by the banks of the Guadalete very beautiful?"

"I thought her then the most beautiful being in the world, now I know that I was in error."

The young Englishman gazed earnestly into the depths of the dark eyes that were raised to his. A slight blush mantled the maiden's cheek as she turned to rejoin her father, and passed with him through the arched-way beneath the gallery into the inner court.

Edward again seated himself in the door, but he no longer took any interest in the manufacture of cooscoosoo. Within an hour his whole being had been changed. He was no longer the same man. His brain seemed on fire—his cheeks glowed as with a hectic, and his frame fairly shivered with nervous excitement.

"This is too much," he exclaimed, rising and pacing the court. "What can it mean? Am I losing my senses?"

"Yah, yah!" muttered Fatima Laboo, looking up from her employment that she had resumed. "He's got a tongue. I thought Leila Xaripha makes him talk some; and now she is going to sing—I guess he hear well enough—yah, yah!—he has plenty of ears, I think."

The tinkling sounds of a guitar came from the lattice above, and then Xaripha's voice poured forth in tones that thrilled through every fibre of Edward's heart, the words of an old Moorish ballad. The air was, like most Moorish tunes, monotonous, but the singer's distinct enunciation gave a sufficiently spirited effect to the sonorous Arabic words.

Batet seidet Abu Yakoob fil leil zudjetun,
Kamet ala-l-fedger ve hia wahaditun.

Thus sang Xaripha. The reader, however, most probably, is as ignorant of Arabic as was Edward, and, moreover, has not the advantage of hearing the air, and of drinking in the full rich tones of the singer's voice. It will be, perhaps, better therefore to give a translation of the song rather than the original Arabic version—

THE EMIR'S BRIDE.

The Queen of Abu Yakoob lay by his side at night,
But lonely was the Sultan's bride at early morning's light,
When springing from the royal couch, she seized Almanzor's child,
And rushed throughout the harem with voice and gestures wild.

Her cries o'erpassed the harem, and through the streets rang out,
The veteran's of Alarcos took up the doleful shout—
Oh! where's the great Almanzor, who led across the main
Four hundred thousand reapers to reap the fields of Spain?

Almanzor the victorious! who smote Alphonzo's ranks,
From the field of red Alarcos to swift Tajo's bloody banks.
Oh, where's our lord, the Sultan, who rules from sea to sea,
From Soudan to Asturias, from Al Garb to Tripoli?

But not a slave could answer that lady's doleful cry,
And not a kaid or bashaw could to the troops reply.
For not a slave had seen him in all the harem's halls,
And not a kaid or bashaw within the city's walls.

But from the gates of Maraksh the doubtful questions spread,
Was Abu Yakoob murdered? was Abu Yakoob dead?
Or had he, tired of throne and state, and touched by grace divine,
Set out to pray, in pilgrim's guise, at Mecca's holy shrine?

Thus for a year they waited, then raised Almanzor's son
To the throne of that vast empire, that Almanzor's sword had won
And the fame of the young Emir rose on their fickle breath—
None thought of Abu Yakoob; none doubted of his death.

But, woe's me! that lone lady, in her lord-deserted bed,
She still believed him living—she could not think him dead—
And she vowed a vow that never would she know nor peace nor rest
Till she'd pillowed her sad sorrow upon Almanzor's breast.

Thus vowed that noble lady, and on her weary way,
Bearing Almanzor's daugher, she wandered many a day
Throughout that noble empire, stretching from sea to sea,
From Soudan to Asturias, from Al Garb to Tripoli.

But God, to whom be glory, looked on her heavy grief,
And sent his trustiest angels to minister relief,
And turned her wandering footsteps to Egypt's distant lands,
Where by Nile's flowing waters the famed Cairo stands.

And there in famed Cairo, that fond and faithful bride
Clasped in her arms Almanzor, at night lay by his side,
And found an end of sorrow, from all her woes a rest,
A pillow to her aching head upon Almanzor's breast—

Almanzor, the great Emir, who tired of throne and state,
Disguised in garb of pilgrim had left his palace gate,
And gone on weary pilgrimage to Mecca's holy shrine,
To pray, among the humblest, for promised grace divine.

Oh! who but He who made us, the Holy One above,
Shall dare to set the measure to a true heart's faith and love!
For its faith is as the whirlwind, and not a Summer's breath;
And its love is as the adamant, enduring unto death.

The tradition, still extant in Morocco, goes on to say that the happy couple resided for several years in great privacy in Cairo, Almanzor earning a living as a baker. Upon his death the Sultana, with her daughter, set out for Morocco. On their way they encountered one of the princes of Tunis, who at once conceived a violent passion for the daughter, and was so unscrupulous in his demonstrations of admiration that her mother was compelled to disclose her illustrious origin; whereupon the prince offered her marriage, and made her the Sultana Sidana of his harem.

CHAPTER VIII.

Again must the reader revisit the Bay of Cadiz—that bright, beautiful bay—as it lay gleaming beneath the slanting rays of the sun, just rising above the distant purple crests of Ronda.

A large three-masted vessel, lateen rigged on the fore and mizzen masts, but with square polacre yards upon the main, was getting under way; and, with a favoring breeze from the East, was slowly working out, with the aid of sweeps, from the crowd of vessels filling the inner anchorage. A small battery of light guns upon the forecastle showed that she was not wholly unprepared for one of the then most formidable dangers of the sea. A high-turreted pyramidal-shaped poop-cabin showed that due attention had been paid to the comfortable berthing of such officials or passengers as should be entitled to the honors and comforts of the quarter-deck.

To this class evidently belonged two ladies, who, attended by an elderly gentleman, were leaning over the railing of the high, peaked-up cabin; and watching with an air of marked interest the slowly receding landmarks, the towers and forts, the towns and quintas, and bridges and mountains, that dotted the entire sweep of the bay.

The gentleman was a stern, hard-featured man, of middle size, and about fifty years of age. He was habited in a blue cloth cloak, beneath which, when thrown open, could be seen

a leather jacket, crossed with bands of fine steel mail, which, although not covering continuously the upper part of his person, would have afforded a very good protection against a sword cut or a dagger's thrust. Around his waist he wore a wide leather belt, with slits in it for pistols, and depending from it a long very old-fashioned *spado*, the scabbard opening by means of a spring, to save time and trouble in drawing the blade, which had, most probably, seen service as far back as the days of Charles V.

The ladies—but to introduce these properly, it is necessary to go back some three or four weeks, to the time when Edward Carlyle went last a love-making to the gardens of the Guadalete, when a very few words will suffice to make the reader acquainted with the graceful beings, who, with intertwined arms, and with their big black eyes floating in the moisture of sad and tender emotion, were taking a lingering look at the receding glories of city and bay.

An intense excitement followed the disappearance of Edward and his rival, Don Diego de Orsolo. Every effort was made to find some clue to their fate. The police of Cadiz were cited to the utmost by large offers of reward from Edward's father. Don Diego's numerous relatives and friends took up the subject with energy, while the officers of the Inquisition made their perquisitions in the matter with their usual perseverance and astuteness; but nothing could be ascertained beyond the fact that pursuers and pursued had both stood out to sea—even conjecture was at fault as to their ultimate fate.

The shock proved too much for the enfeebled health of the English merchant. In a few days the body of the heretic was carried across to Rota, and buried in unconsecrated ground. No sooner had he breathed his last than the cormorants of the law and the church, who had been eagerly watching for his demise, rushed to divide the spoil; but great was their disappointment upon finding that the fortune they had considered almost within their grasp had vanished, leaving nothing but a country seat covered with mortgages, a dozen or two pipes of poor sherry, and a few personal effects hardly valuable enough to excite, still less gratify, the cupidity of the lowest clerks in the departments of the Administrador, Registrator, &c. The experienced merchant had proved himself too cunning for them—having contrived

to quietly and secretly transfer all of his property to his own country, where, by his last will, it was to be held in trust for a period of years, to await the turning up of one or both of his lost sons.

The disappearance of Don Diego, of course, put an end, for a time at least, to the marriage schemes entertained for the fair Isabel by her father. There was no wealthy suitor at hand ready to supply Don Diego's place; and, in fact, it may be questioned whether, stern and hard as he was, Don Pedro de Estivan would, in any other case than that of his kinsman, Orsolo, have undertaken to force his daughter into marrying contrary to her inclinations. Luckily there occurred no new opportunity; and luckily, too, there happened an improvement in Don Pedro's fortunes, that took away one of the temptations to exercise too sternly what every good Spaniard of that day thought his undoubted right—the right of marrying his daughter to whomsoever he pleased.

For years Don Pedro had been vainly soliciting some of the lucrative colonial appointments in the gift of the Spanish crown. Now, as if to console him for the lost of a wealthy son-in-law, the nomination to the governorship of Fuertaventura, one of the Canaries, was proffered him. The appointment Don Pedro considered far below his deserts; but he was as poor he was proud, and there was connected with the office a monopoly of sugar, then one of the chief products of the Canaries, which induced him to waive his claims to the Governor-generalship of all the Islands, and accept that of Fuertaventura alone.

Not long did the worthy Don hesitate, when the appointment, through the influence of his friend, the Marqu's de San Roque, was offered to him. The struggle to keep up appearances was wearing away his health and temper. He was glad of an excuse for breaking up his already reduced establishment, and he at once took passage for h m elf and daughters in a government polacre that was getting ready for Teneriffe —the same polacre that we have seen drawing out from the inner harbor, and turning seaward as she opened the mouth of the bay—the same polacre that may now be seen rounding Point Sebastian—and having obtained a fair offing from the shore, hauling her wind and standing down along the African shore.

It was a questionable experiment, that of hugging the

Spanish and Moorish coasts, thus making a direct course for Lancerote, and so it seemed to an old quartermaster, who very freely expressed his objurgations of the captain's stupidity in the hearing of the sisters, who, despite the increasing heat of the sun, still kept their position, in the shadow of the sail, on the cabin deck.

The movements and mutterings of the old sailor at length attracted their attention. Juanita, impulsive and fearless, dropped her sister's arm, and gliding to his side, tapped his shoulder slightly with her fan. The old man looked up from his work, and a smile of admiration chased the temporary expression of moroseness from his still frank and open countenance. He sprang to his feet, and cap in hand, awaited Juanita's commands.

"Tell me," she said, "what is it that disturbs you? Did I understand you aright, that there is danger in keeping this shore in sight?"

The old man looked for some time at the young girl, and then deliberately turned his gaze upon Isabel. From the sisters his eye wandered to the distant shore. His face grew serious, but he said nothing; his only reply to the question was a grave shake of the head.

Isabel began to feel alarmed. Juanita's interest was aroused, and she placed her hand upon the arm of the sailor, and again repeated the question.

"What is it we have to dread?" she demanded, imperatively. "Are we not taking the most direct course for Fuertaventura? Why an unsafe one?"

"Because of the pirates, Señorita; we shall be more apt to be picked up by some fellow lying in the mouth of the straits, or under some headland of the Moorish coast,"

Isabel grasped her sister's arm and drew her back, as if deprecating any further inquiry into such a subject. Juniata, however, was of a different spirit; she did not feel that danger could be eluded by merely shutting the eyes, and although her heart quickened its beats, and her breath came short, she continued her questioning.

"Why, then, do you take this course?" she demanded. "Why not go farther from the land?"

"Because the captain, in despite all that I can say, persists in asserting that the rovers cruise farther out to sea; that they understand the trick of our vessels in making a westing of

three or four hundred miles, and running round Madeira to the Canaries, and that they are on the watch for them accordingly: true, they used to do so, but they have changed their plans lately. They have found out that something besides fishing-boats is to be picked up along shore. I shall be much surprised if we don't catch sight of a bloody flag before we see Lancerote."

"But surely we need not fear if we do meet with one—are we not armed? these guns—are they useless?" demanded the younger sister.

"Hush, Juanita!" replied Isabel, pressing her sister's arm with a trembling grasp; "how lightly you talk—you speak of a battle with Moorish pirates in a tone that frightens me."

"Well, Isabel, I shall not invoke a battle, for your sake; but I must confess that there is something in the idea that makes my blood tingle not unpleasantly. You remember the song, Isabel," and the young girl sang, in a low voice, a verse of the ballad of Dragut the Corsair:

"'There came a wreath of smoke from out a culverine,
The corsair's stern it broke, and he sank into the brine;
Down Moor and fettered Christian went beneath the billows' roar,
But hell had work for Dragut, and he swam safe ashore."

But I suppose if the fight actually took place, I should be as frightened as you."

"The Virgin preserve you, Señorita," said the old sailor, "from learning by experience how you would feel in an encounter with pirates. As for fighting, I fear there would not be much of it in our case. Our batteries are small; the ship is in bad order, and but half manned. No—if we meet with pirates our only chance will be to run."

"Run!" exclaimed Juanita, "I am afraid in that case we shall not rival the fame of the Knights of Malta. They will never sing of us:

'Oh, swiftly, very swiftly, they up the straits have gone!
Oh, swiftly flies the corsair, and swift the cross comes on!
The cross upon yon banner that streams unto the breeze,
It is the sign of victory—the cross of the Maltese.'"

It was now near the middle of the forenoon, and the direct rays of the sun, aided by the reflected glare from the ocean, making it unpleasant to remain longer on deck, the two ladies retired to the cabin, where they amused themselves with the

usual employments of the Spanish fair—embroidering, and singing to the guitar. Dinner filled up a part of the time; the customary siesta finished another portion of the day; and adjusting their mantillas, and spreading their fans to shade their eyes from the declining sun, the sisters again made their appearance upon the deck.

It was a glorious afternoon—golden and glowing, but soft and subdued. Abeam of the polacre stretched the long passage between Calpe and Abyla—the famous pillars of Hercules—into the Mediterranean. On the quarter were the yellowish headlands of Trafalgar, and on the bow the darker cliffs of Cape Spartel, and the browner summits of Bubanna, (now, sometimes, called Mount Washington,) and other Moorish hills. The polacre was directly off the entrance to the Straits.

Isabel seated herself, and leaning upon the carved railing, gazed pensively upon the broad tract of water that had been passed since morning.

"Come, Isabel," exclaimed the younger sister; "let us walk, the vessel is very steady now; come, 'tis no time for musing, especially with such a doleful countenance; and as for sighing, there is no occasion for it. I tell you your lover will come to life again; and if he should not, you can afford to lose him even if you loved him ever so desperately."

"How so?" demanded Isabel.

"Why you can balance your loss of Don Edward by your escape from Don Diego, and thank the Virgin then for her mercies. But the case is not so bad as that—Don Edward is alive, and besides, you do not love him."

"How do you know that?" inquired Isabel.

"You have told me so fifty times."

"But I may not have known myself," returned the elder, blushing, and drawing the slender figure of Juanita down to her side.

"Aye, but I know it from a surer source; nay, don't be frightened; I know it only from my own observation and penetration. You do not love him, and what is more, you could not love him; he is not suited to you."

"And why not, pray? In what have you discovered that he is deficient?" exclaimed Isabel. "Is he not the handsomest man in Cadiz?"

Juanita made a gesture of assent.

"And brave, and generous, and accomplished?"

"True, true, all," replied the young girl; "but still you love him not."

"And if I do not," said Isabel, "I am sure I cannot tell the reason why."

"But I can," replied Juanita; "he is unsuited to you by reason of resemblance. You, Isabel, are not of that class of women who can love men precisely their equals. You demand more of will—more strength of character—than you have yourself. The man you love must be a little your superior—Edward is not."

"And you, Juanita," interrupted Isabel, laughing, and looking up, but with an expressson of surprise, "which of these classes do you suppose that you belong to, or rather to what class do you expect to belong when you grow up?"

"Grow up," exclaimed Juanita, starting to her feet; "look at me, Isabel. I am half a head taller than you are now. Is not that enough? But you wish to know to which class I belong—to neither. I could not love a man a little, just a *little* my superior. I should detest my equal; I should despise my inferior; although I can conceive an assemblage of qualities in a man of no great strength of mind that could win my regard; and perhaps if I were called upon to cherish and protect him, I might cultivate a certain degree of affection for him—a kind of motherly sentiment. Don't laugh, Isabel; it is true. I have thought it all over a hundred times. But the man for me to love—oh! as I could love such a man—is one who is vastly my superior, not so much in accomplishment, nor even in intellect, but in irresistible force of character; a man who will compel my spirit to bend its knee to his; who will command my soul to stand still, and shine on him, as Joshua commanded the sun; who can trample my will to the dust beneath the tread of his irresistible and indomitable energy, and fixity, and courage. You, Isabel, require that the man you love should make you look up to, and admire him, and that he should guide and protect you. I require that he should make me worship him and fear him; and that, instead of guiding and protecting me, he should master me. I want that he should conquer the domain of my soul, add it to his own, and then generously divide the sovereignty between us."

"Juanita dear," exclaimed Isabel, seizing her sister's arm,

"Are you crazy? Where did you get such notions? Who told you all this nonsense?" And nonsense it seemed to the elder sister, who although she had not been subjected to the rigid restrictions of Spanish female education, had never accustomed her thoughts to any very bold sallies beyond the pale of conventional propriety and prejudice.

"Who should tell me," replied Juanita, "except my own heart? Everything is not to be learned from the sermons of Father Padilla."

"Nor from those foolish romances, or from those Italian poets. But tell me, Juanita, do you expect ever to encounter this conqueror—this tyrant; and how will you know him if you do?"

"Instinct, sister; I shall feel his presence as the flowers feel the sun. And if I ever do meet him—"

"If you do meet him," interrupted Isabel, "think you that you will surrender without a struggle?"

"Oh, that will depend," replied Juanita, laughing, "upon the strength of his array and the way in which he marshals his forces. If he lets me see at first that he is too strong for me, I shall surrender at once."

"And if he does not, woe betide him!" exclaimed Isabel, rising and passing her arm around her sister's waist. "Poor knight, I pity him. He will have to invoke Santiago. Cupid won't help him. My dear little *chica* will attack him, and rout him, horse and foot. But what is that? Look, Juanita, what can it be?"

The conversation of the sisters was interrupted by a movement among the sailors on the forecastle of the polacre. Hurried exclamations passed fore and aft, while several officers ascended the rigging of the mainmast to get a better look at an object that was attracting all eyes towards the distant African coast.

"Do you see that black speck hereaway, señorita?" said the old quartermaster. "Well, that is a large galley. She has no sails set; but the best eyes among us say she has her sweeps out, and that she is pulling for this polacre."

"But why does she not use her sails?" demanded Isabel, with breathless interest. "The wind is fair for her, if she is coming this way."

"That is just it," returned the old man; "why don't she, señorita? I'm afraid it is because she wants to creep down

upon us as closely as possible without being seen. But we shall know soon; that is, if the captain takes my advice, which is, to up with the helm and square away for the West, right before the wind. That will let the fellow know that we have discovered him; and if he wishes to overhaul us, he will have to set his sails and make the best use of his wind."

The manœuvre indicated was at length executed; and for a few moments the hopes of the groups on the deck of the polacre rose, as the black speck astern remained without change. These hopes, however, were destined to a cruel disappointment. Suddenly the black speck disappeared, and, as if by magic, there gleamed the white canvas of a large triangular sail. A deep sensation was manifest throughout the polacre; it was evident that the galley was in chase.

"Think you it is a Moorish corsair?" demanded Isabel, supporting her trembling figure by a grasp upon her younger but more composed sister.

The quartermaster took a long look at the pursuing craft, and then deliberately turned his eyes upon his fair auditors. An ominous shake of the head was his only reply.

Isabel clung close to her sister.

"If yonder vessel is a Moorish corsair," whispered Juanita, "answer me one question—what will be our chance of escape?"

"Oh! that depends upon their rate of sailing. This craft is not so slow before the wind, and there is many a pirate that she will outsail easily; but there is one of the Salee rovers—perhaps you have heard of him—"

The sisters shuddered, and even the blood fled for a moment from Juanita's cheek and lips.

"Oh! I see that you have heard of him. Well, if that should prove to be the galley of Hassan Herach, there is no hope for us in running."

"Then we must fight!" exclaimed Don Pedro, who, for the first time, had been brought out of his cabin by the bustle on deck. "Never fear; we shall be able to drive off a set of rascally Moors, even if this famous Herach is at the head of them."

Don Pedro spoke lightly and encouragingly; but an expression of concern tempered the look of affection which beamed from his usually stern face, as his eyes fell upon his daughters. The maidens, almost for the first time in their

lives, felt themselves drawn to him by a sentiment of close and intimate relationship. A glimmering of the love that they might have had for him flashed upon the minds of both. Something of the same perception dawned upon the mind of Don Pedro. Not that he had not at heart a strong affection for his children, but circumstances had prevented him from manifesting it, or from making any effort to call forth a corresponding sentiment in return. He had been too busy with the constant struggle between his pride and his poverty to love them much or to make them love him. With expressions of tenderness that he had not vouchsafed before for years, he conducted them to their cabin. Returning to the deck, he joined the anxious council of officers. The energy and courage of the Don were irresistible, and it was unanimously resolved to fight.

But to fight with any chance of success, it was necessary to put the polacre in order for battle—no easy matter, owing to the inefficiency of the officers, and the confusion among the crew. The name of Hassan Herach had spread among them, and nothing would they listen to but the exaggerated and contradictory stories of a dozen voluble raconteurs, who made out the famous rover to be of all ages, colors and characteristics.

Don Pedro, however, was in his element. He was an experienced soldier; and, although harsh in manner and selfish in disposition, he possessed a commanding energy, that just fitted him to take the lead in moments of hesitation or danger. By his encouraging exhortations to the officers, and his stern commands to the men, the polacre was at length in some degree prepared for battle. Arms and ammunition were produced; the batteries put in working order; the men assigned to their quarters, and a couple of brass culverines hoisted up from the hold, and mounted, as stern-chasers, upon the cabin deck.

The sisters retired to the cabin, where sat Father Padilla, in an ecstacy of fear. In one hand he held his beads; in the other a huge *bota* of sherry, which he not infrequently applied to his mouth; while, in the intervals he muttered his prayers, and industriously fingered the rosary. Isabel threw herself before an image of the Virgin, while Juanita took her seat by the stern window, and gazed at the advancing sail that was gleaming in the last rays of the purple twilight.

It was soon evident that the pursuing galley was the best sailer, and by ten o'clock she had got near enough to open with her bow guns on the polacre. There was no longer any doubt as to the character of the galley, or as to the fate that awaited the Spaniards in case they suffered themselves to be captured. The fire was returned with spirit.

For half an hour this cannonade was kept up without much damage on either side, although both vessels were struck by several raking shots. In the meanwhile the galley continued rapidly to overhaul the polacre, and the danger of being boarded in overwhelming numbers, according to the favorite mode of attack practised by the Salee rovers, momentarily increased.

Don Pedro encouraged the men, at the stern guns, to renewed exertion; but still, although several of their shots passed through the galley's foresail, and swept amid the crowds around her forecastle-batteries, no injury was done that could impede the rapid advance of the Moors. So close were they new, that the rattling of musketry began to mingle with the heavy boom of the cannon and the shouts and cheers of the combatants. The guns on both sides were of very small calibre. The corsair's batteries consisted of two or three, four and six pounders, mounted on the forecastle *en barbette*, or looking over the low bulwarks, instead of through port-holes. As many more were mounted at the stern of the galley. The damage on either side, therefore, after an hour's fighting, was small in comparison with the terrible effects produced by the full, heavy armaments of later days.

Steadily Juanita maintained her position at the open port, from which she had a distinct view of the deck of the crowded galley, lit up by the continual flashes of the guns; and even when a shot came crashing in through the timbers over her head she stirred not.

"Strange," thought the young girl, glancing at the cowering forms of her sister and Father Padilla, "strange that I feel no fear. My heart beats high, but I do not tremble; and yet perhaps it is not courage, 'tis confidence in my fate. I cannot feel that I am in danger."

A scream from Isabel drew the attention of the young girl. The cabin door was open, and entering there appeared several sailors bearing the body of Don Pedro. He was not dead, but a deep wound in the breast, from which the life blood

was rapidly welling, left him but a few moments to live. The sisters flew to their father, and assisted in supporting him to a couch. As the tide of life ebbed, the long buried affections of Don Pedro were disclosed to himself. He felt that the bitterest pang of death was in leaving his daughters, and that, too, under such circumstances—and, to such a fate! He gazed at them by the dim light from the single lamp with a look of anguish. He pressed their hands in his feeble grasp. His lips moved—

"Shall I call Father Padilla?" whispered Isabel.

The dying man rolled his eyes in the direction of the priest and shook his head. Isabel loosened the cross from her bosom, and pressed it to his lips.

At this moment, a shot from the galley shattered the rudder of the polacre, and the next instant another, ranging ahead, carried away the slings of the lateen fore-yard, which allowed the polacre to broach to, and placed her directly athwart the advancing galley. Unluckily, the Spaniards carried no guns except the small battery we have mentioned on the forecastle, and this at the moment was unmanned, or an effective raking fire might have been poured into the Moors, to avoid which they would have been compelled to give up their design of boarding.

A few of the Spaniards rushed forward to the forecastle guns, but it was too late. The bow of the low galley passed directly beneath the stern of the polacre, and both vessels were at once locked together by barbed boarding hooks and grappling irons.

"Follow me," shouted the captain of the corsair, "beat down the dogs, but kill none who surrender. Follow me—through the cabin ports!" and making a spring from the rail of his vessel, the young man threw himself into the cabin window of the polacre. Before, however, a single one of his crew could follow him, the momentum of the galley whirled the polacre around, and brought both vessels alongside of each other. The Moors were now compelled to board over the quarter railing, leaving their young captain unsupported in the cabin.

For a moment, Hassan—or if the reader prefers his Christian name, Henry Carlyle—was somewhat taken aback, at sight of the scene revealed by the dim lamp hanging from the ceiling. On one side sat muttering and mumbling

Father Padilla, on the other lay the dead body of Don Pedro, from which the breath of life had just departed, and leaning over it were the graceful forms of the sisters. Satisfied that there was no opposition to be encountered, Hassan dropped his sword, and touching the half-paralyzed priest, he demanded the names and rank of the inmates of the cabin; but not an intelligible word could he get in reply from the worthy padre, who, what with fear, and the contents of the *bota*, was nearly speechless.

The noise of the combat increased as the Moors poured in over the bulwarks of the unlucky polacre.

Hassan advanced towards the sisters—"I know not who you are, ladies, and I have no time to ask; but trust in me, your fate may not be so bad as you fear! at least, I will do all I can to alleviate it. Cover your faces in your mantillas; or, here, muffle yourselves well in these hangings—be sure and let none of my men see your faces, and I will protect you."

Passing through the outer cabin, where were huddled together the terrified domestics of Don Estivan, the Moorish captain gained the deck. The combat still raged, but the voice of the rover soon brought it to an end.

"Quarter, men !—give the Kaffirs quarter !" he shouted in a voice that sent the rolling Arabic gutturals far above the din of the conflict. "Save as many of the slaves as you can."

The Spaniards threw down their arms, and the Moors proceeded to secure their prisoners; and although the fight had been desperate, and their passions fully aroused, they did so with much less violence and cruelty than was, at that time, usually practised toward Christian slaves; or, for the matter of that, by the Christians toward their Moorish captives when, in their turn, the Christians happened to be conquerors.

A number of the stoutest captives were removed to the galley and chained to the oars; a prize crew was then put on board the polacre, and both vessels made sail for Salee.

Among the prisoners transferred to the galley were the sisters, leaving unluckily, as it afterwards proved for them, their two female servants aboard of the polacre. The inner cabin—the one in which took place the first interview between Edward and his brother—was assigned exclusively to their use. No one entered except a black slave bearing their meals; and much to their surprise, the dreaded rais, Hassan Herach, evinced no disposition to intrude upon their privacy.

This treatment, so different from what they had expected, at length excited their curiosity as well as surprise, and as each day closed without bringing the presence of the rover, the sentiment increased in force, and served to neutralize, to some little extent, their grief for the death of Don Pedro, and their anxiety for themselves. The third day closed, and found them fully interested in the questions—why had they received no message from the captain of the corsair? what kind of a man would he prove? and who could the young man be who had addressed them in the cabin of the polacre?

CHAPTER IX.

LIGHT head-winds and calms retarded the progress of the corsair and her prize. On the tenth day, however, the scene changed—a single black cloud swept rapidly along the surface of the ocean, lashing it to foam, and leaving behind it a heavy sea, and a strong wind, which blew a gale for several hours. After the nucleus of the tornado had passed, and the sun had again risen, the polacre was nowhere to be seen. It was decided that she had been compelled to scud, and that it would be a useless delay to lie by for her; so the prow of the galley was again turned for Salee. On the thirteenth day, dating from the capture, the turrets of *Sma Hassan* came in sight.

The first three days the sisters were left in undisturbed possession of their cabin, and their hearts began to be animated with hopes of a more agreeable fate than they at first anticipated. They knew that there was in Morocco a Spanish agency for the redemption of prisoners, and they could not doubt that their captors would be willing to accept the ransom that would be offered, as soon as their relatives, at Cadiz, should be apprized of their situation.

"But suppose," demanded Juanita, "that we should be sold as slaves, and fall into the hands of some one who would refuse all ransom. I have heard that it is not always easy to

secure the liberty of a Christian slave in Morocco, even with money."

"Ah, in that case," replied Isabel, "ours would be a fate worse than death."

"You mean, sister dear," returned Juanita, throwing her arms around Isabel's neck, and drawing her head to her bosom, "You mean that we shall be doomed to the harem."

"I do," whispered Isabel, closing her eyes, as if to shut out some dreadful sight, and convulsively clasping her sister's waist.

"And you think that worse than death?" inquired Juanita.

"Oh, yes; worse than a thousand deaths."

Juanita bowed her mouth to her sister's ear, "Let us die, then," she whispered in a voice, calm in accent, but full of emotion.

"Die?" murmured Isabel.

"Yes, if it is necessary, die," and the young girl took Isabel's hand, and placed it beneath the folds of her dress; "feel it," she continued; "it is our father's dagger; it shall serve for us both."

Isabel drew her hand from the dagger's hilt, and shuddered. Starting back, she held her sister off at arms' length, and gazed into her face with an expression of pure wonder; "Child! child!—but no, you are no child! You have grown old latterly by years, not days. How came you to think of this?"

"I saw it," replied Juanita, "in Don Pedro's last glance. He was harsh, and hard, and unsympathizing; but still he loved us; and think you not that he would have driven his dagger into our hearts sooner than have seen us the inmates of a Moorish harem? It was in his dying look that I read it, and when I secured his dagger he smiled and died."

Isabel gazed at her sister in wondering silence; she felt that Juanita's character was developing itself with a rapidity and force, the ultimate degree of which her own more gentle nature could not foresee or comprehend. She was about to reply, but the door opened, and there entered a black slave, who announced, in a respectful tone, that the rais desired permission to present himself to his guests.

The moment had come for an interview with the dreaded Hassan Herach, and muffling their faces in their mantillas, the sisters awaited, in trembling anxiety, the entrance of the redoubtable rover.

Amid the din of the conflict, in the dim light of the polacre's cabin, the sisters had received no very definite impression of the form and figure of the Moorish captain, still less of his features. They heard a pleasant voice addressing them, as they hung over the dead body of Don Pedro, and involuntarily they obeyed its direction to muffle their faces; but beyond that, they had no idea of the person by whom they had been addressed, and little did they think that it had been by Hassan Herach himself.

The astonishment of the sisters may be imagined, when, after a moment's delay, the black again threw open the cabin door; and there appeared a young man, habited in Moorish garb, the very image, apparently, of Edward Carlyle.

A moment's pause, and Juanita was about to start forward towards him. A slight movement of Isabel restrained her. The eye of the elder, better practised in the study of Edward's features, marked at once the slight differences that distinguished the brothers. The one before her had a peculiarly quiet and dignified carriage, a graver and somewhat sterner expression of face. The features were the same in both; but, in the captain of the corsair, they had a more settled and determined aspect, more the air of habitual command; more of thoughtful self-control.

Hassan marked the sensation his appearance excited. Advancing, with a courteous smile, he addressed them in tones that almost made Isabel doubt whether she had not decided too readily against the identity of the speaker with her admirer of Cadiz.

"The señoritas are surprised to find in the captain of this galley so close a resemblance to an old friend. If they will do me the favor to listen, I will explain how it so happens."

With a polite wave of the hand, the young Moorish captain requested the sisters to be seated, and then deliberately assuming a position at their feet, he began his and his brother's story. No expression of emotion betrayed the deep interest his auditors took in the tale, until he came to speak of the final escape of Edward, when Juanita could no longer contain her delight, which she expressed by letting fall her mantilla from her face, and giving her sister a hearty embrace.

"I told you," she exclaimed, "that he would come to life again. You have no longer to reproach yourself with his

death. But where is he now?" she demanded, turning to the rais. "Shall we see him? Is he free? Is he well!"

"He is, I hope, in safety," replied Hassan. "For reasons of prudence I sent him inland to the city of Mequinez. Sometimes, you know, the nearer the rocks the farther from danger. Suspicion slumbers soundest in the heart of the camp. I intended to follow him in a few days, but unluckily an order from my capricious master compelled me to put to sea."

"And now," continued the speaker, after a pause, having finished his story, "will not the señorita permit me a view of the charms so much vaunted by my brother?"

There was something in the tones of the young captain's voice, and in his gestures and looks, that had strangely affected Isabel's heart. Could it be that the resemblance to Edward was the cause of her emotion, and that she had been wrong in supposing herself so indifferent to him? The thought occurred to her, and kept her silent while the captain of the corsair was speaking.

Isabel, in obedience to the request, threw back her mantilla, and as she did so, a blush mantled her cheek and restored for a moment its usual beauty to her face, blanched by the recent scenes of fear and sorrow. Steadfastly for a minute and more did the young man gaze into her dark eyes.

"Señorita," he exclaimed, as her look faltered beneath his steady glance, "I wonder not at the temerity of Edward. My brother were a coward indeed, had he not dared any danger for such eyes as yours."

"Señorita," he continued, rising to his feet, "you can confide in me—you can believe me—"

"I do—I do," impulsively exclaimed Isabel, extending her hand.

The Moorish captain took her hand, spread it in his open palm, and deliberately looked at it for a few moments.

"Yes—you can believe me; I shall do all for your safety that I can do; but the issue is with God."

As the captain left the cabin, he paused for a moment in the outer room, and an expression of deep anxiety passed over his features. He thought of the last order from the Sultan, that all prisoners were to be considered imperial propery, and sent at once to Mequinez.

"But if this head-wind lasts," he muttered to himself, as

he went on deck, "we shall have three or four days to think of what is best to be done."

Luckily, the head-wind lasted not only for three or four days, but for more than a week, and it was not, as we have said at the beginning of the chapter, until the close of the thirteenth day, that the tower of *Sma Hassan* came in sight.

'Tis strange how much under the control of outward and external circumstance is the sentiment of love. The germs of the passion may lie in compatibility of organization, of feeling and of taste; but it requires the influence of peculiar external circumstances to quicken the seed and to ripen the fruit. Like the leaden balls used by the natural philosopher, in the familiar illustration of the principle of cohesion, two hearts may touch each other with a certain force, and yet remain forever distinct—a little more external force. a little more compression, and almost instantaneously a union, strong as the fibres of either, is complete.

In a manner, Isabel was an illustration of this principle. The attentions of Edward Carlyle had gratified her vanity, and his person and accomplishments had pleased her fancy, but had not in reality interested her heart. She admired him, liked him, and loved him not. But, a captive in a Moorish corsair, and brought under such peculiar circumstances into so intimate a relationship with his brother, her heart was forced within the sphere of attraction, and leaped up at once like steel to the magnet.

True, there were differences in the brothers that might in part explain the superior influence of Hassan, but there can be no question that if Edward had stood in his place, Isabel would have looked at him with different feelings than when throwing her careless glances from the balcony at Cadiz, or from the arbors of the Guadalete.

But whether she would have loved Edward much or little, certain it is that her heart acknowledged at once the presence of its master in the person of his brother. A true Gaditana—impressive, impulsive, and overflowing with passion and feeling, it required but a few days of close and intimate intercourse to develop the whole loving capacities of her nature. Here, however, was not that fiery and energetic love that Juanita would have felt—a love lofty and dazzling as the flames of a volcano—a love stimulating, not controlling the intellect and will—but hers was a love that pervaded her

whole soul, heart and brain—a universal sentiment into which were absorbed all feeling, intellect and volition.

And did the rover return this passion? There was nothing in the grave courtesy with which he treated the sisters—nothing in the quiet maner in which he discoursed of the events of his life—his strange adventures—his religious sentiments—nothing in the calm glances of his eye to indicate that he did, and yet Isabel had not a doubt.

The grounds of this confidence it would have been difficult for Isabel to declare; it was, nevertheless, well founded. From the first interview, the heart of the young Moorish captain had beat with a feeling that he did not dare to avow even to himself. His newly found brother's image rose up before him.

"He said that he loved her not," muttered the rais, pacing the deck, "but it cannot be; he must love her, and I—I must steel my heart to her charms."

Still the growing sentiment refused to be stifled; and when, at the end of a fortnight, the landmarks of Salee came into sight, and all the difficulties of his position arising from the recent order of the Sultan, that all slaves should be at once sent to Mequinez, rushed upon Hassan's mind, he knew that he loved—madly, desperately loved.

Slowly the galley drew in under the influence of her sweeps to the mouth of the Buregreb, forming the harbor of Salee. Keeping time to a slow monotonous strain chanted by a gang of Moors on the forecastle, the slaves manning the oars rose and fell back with a steady and simultaneous pull on the heavy sweeps. At intervals a gun from the forecastle battery announced that once again the famous Hassan Rais had triumphed over the hated flag that was trailing at his galley's stern.

And now the minarets and battlements of Salee and Rabat are in sight. The rais looked at them intently, and an increasing shade of gloom came across his face.

"If I could contrive to smuggle them ashore I could keep them concealed easily enough," he muttered to himself. "But that will be impossible; we shall be boarded, perhaps outside the bar, by the captain of the port, then all will be known, and I shall have to surrender them to the kaid of the slaves.

Hassan started to his feet, while trembling on his lips was

an order to put about and sail away from the dreaded port. But whither? He could go to no Christian land; and although master of the galley, he knew that he was watched; the Marquiens having lately adopted the practice of the Algerines, who, always jealous of the captains of their corsairs, especially if they were able men and favorites with their crews, were forced to send on board an aga or kaid of soldiers to overlook and report of their doings. Besides this officer, Hassan knew that he had an enemy in the *Bash Sota Rais*, or first lieutenant, whose unnecessary cruelty to captives he had had more than one occasion to repress. For a moment the desperate rais contemplated the design of liberating the slaves at the oars, and the captives of the polacre, mastering the Moors, turning them adrift in the small boats, and then setting sail for some Christian land. But a new and more feasible plan crossed his mind. The gloomy countenance of the rais lighted up with an expression of hope.

"I can do as much as that at any rate," he exclaimed, in a low voice. "I will defy the *kleefa* of the kaid of the slaves—I will assert my right to obey the Sultan's order in person, and to conduct all my captives to the court myself. That will give us time and, at least, opportunity. Who knows what may happen by the way? Oh! if I can communicate with Casbin Subah, the Berber, in time, he could aid me—he could save us. Oh! holy and true prophet of God—be you He of Mecca or He of Nazareth—send the chief of the Beni Mozarg to our help."

It will be recollected that the religious education of the young rais had been sadly neglected; and that to him there was no impropriety in his equivocally ascribed prayer. But, right or wrong, it had an inspiriting effect, and he superintended the delicate operation of taking the galley in through the breakers that beat upon the bar of the Buregreb, with his usual alacrity and skill.

The arrival of the famous rover, of course, created quite a sentation; and the inhabitants turned out *en masse* from both cities to see the landing of the Christian dogs. Great was the disappointment and even indignation among the officials of the town when the rais announced his determination to allow no one to board the galley. The redoubtable Hassan Herach, always a favorite with the populace, was now the hero of the hour. He knew that if he chose to take such a responsibility

his crew would stand by him; and, although there was great danger, in view of the capricious nature of the Sultan, there was almost equal danger, provided he gained the favor of the tyrant, to any one who should oppose him. Despite, however, his commands to admit no one, the galley no sooner struck the sand, than a big, burly negro—his face strongly marked by the smallpox—clambered up by the channels over the bulwarks. With a loud voice he announced himself as Hammed ben Slowek, the newly appointed kaid of the slaves.

Hassan advanced with a courteous salute to the new kaid, but his manner rapidly changed to an expression of contempt, as he listened to the blustering tones of the negro.

"Why is it," demanded the kaid, "that the polacre has not arrived with you?"

"Ask the whirlwind," replied Hassan; "it, no doubt, will give you a fitting answer."

"It has the larger portion of the captives on board, you say; are there any women among them?"

"There are women among them?" shortly replied Hassan.

"When will they arrive?"

"I know not."

"Well, we must wait for them, I suppose; but the captives you have here in your galley, you will surrender them to my keeping. Here is the order of our lord the Sultan to that effect—all Christians are to be sent up to Mequinez."

"I shall escort the slaves that I have captured to Mequinez myself," sternly replied Hassan. "I shall obey the order of the Sultan—to whom may God give a happy life—but I shall permit no interference with my rights. Go, then, in peace, and trouble not thy soul about the security of my captives. What my hands have won they can hold."

"Deliver me the women, then," exclaimed the kaid, in an insolent tone. "The Sultan—may God preserve his life—has given me all the women who may be brought into port during this month as the pay of my office."

The blood forsook Hassan's lips; he clenched his teeth, but his habitual self-command for a moment restrained him, and he made no reply.

"Ha! I know that you have Christian women here," exclaimed the kaid, pointing to the cabin; "you must, at least,

deliver them to me; they are my property, and I will have them; keep the men, and we will settle the question about them at Mequinez, but surrender the women—they are mine."

Hassan could control his rage no longer.

"To the ground instantly, or I will throw you over the bulwarks,' he shouted, advancing upon the kaid.

The negro started back, and drew his sword, with a menacing air; but he had hardly time to extend it, when it was crossed by the blade of the excited rais. A single clash, and the weapon of the kaid flew far out upon the sand. The rover dropped his sword to the deck and seized the kaid.

"On your head be it!" shouted the enraged negro.

"On my head be it!" replied Hassan; and, lifting the struggling kaid bodily, he dashed him over the bulwarks with a force that would have left but little life in him, had it not been that the sand was wet and soft from the receding tide.

CHAPTER X.

THE aspect of nature in Morocco is peculiar and striking. There are comparatively but few signs of cultivation, and yet the country has an old look, that gives it a very different appearance from any of the thinly peopled districts of the New World. The towns, which are mainly inhabited by the true Moors, many of them the descendants of the expatriated Saracens of Andalusia, mingled with Jews, negro slaves, and Christian renegades, who, in the present day, mostly consist of escaped convicts and deserters from the Spanish garrison of Ceuta, are few and wide apart. There are no villages, but in their place are the douahs or groups of low brown tents inhabited by the Arabs, or rather by a mixed race of Arabs and Africans. These at a little distance can scarcely be distinguished from clumps of palmetto bushes which in many parts dot the slopes of the hills. In the great plains, like that in which stands the city of Morocco, the country at certain seasons is strikingly beautiful. Nothing can surpass the rich profusion of the affluent vegetation. Luxuriant fields of wheat and barley wave in the breeze, laden with the odors of a thousand flow-

ering plants, chiefly of the bulbous kind. Herds of cattle and horses may be seen trampling the tall grass, or reposing under the shade of innumerable palms. But in the dry season all this beauty vanishes, and an air of desolation and decay pervades the wide horizon. Even when vegetation is most flourishing, the traveler is struck with the vast disproportion between the spontaneous productions of nature and the returns of direct agricultural appliances. The Arabs, who are a mixed race, composed partly of the original Saracenic invaders, and of the crowds of emigrants from Arabia who followed the conquest, partly of the original inhabitants of the plains, and partly of Lybian tribes, who have poured in from the borders of the Saharah, are too idle and ignorant to develop a tithe of the natural capabilities ol the soil. The despotism of the Government—the exactions and oppressions of bashaws and inferior agents, have wrought their inevitable and legitimate effects, the demoralization and depopulation of the country. It may be questioned whether the whole empire contains five millions of people. The great plain of Morocco alone could, if properly cultivated, easily support twice that number.

In the northern part of the empire, from Fez and Mequinez to the Straits of Gibraltar, the aspect of the country is still more desolate. The entire absence of houses, except occasionally the whitewashed sanctorea of celebrated saints; of fences, bridges or roads; the hills low and brown, or covered with scraggy pines and dwarf oaks; marshes overgrown with willows; and plains cut up by water-course,s and covered with wild mustard, furze, palmetto bushes and thistle—present a scene or scenes at once disagreeable and pleasing, saddening and inspiring; and, to extend the apparent paradox, ugly and unfit for a picture, yet delightfully picturesque.

As it is now, so was the country in the days of Muley Ismael; and so was it when, one morning, a few days after the arrival of the corsair at Salee, a large party might have been seen skirting the small forest of oak that stretches from the plain of Marmora up to the spurs of the Atlas. It consisted of about a hundred Moorish horsemen, and fifty or sixty Christian prisoners, chained two and two, on foot. In the rear rode two female figures, closely muffled to their eyes, in haicks of white woollen. They were mounted upon mules,

and were accompanied by a young man, riding a fine gray barb; behind these came a black, followed by a dozen Moors; with firelocks carried across the front of the saddle. These last were a few of the most devoted followers of the commander of the party, in whom the reader, of course, at once recognizes Hassan Herach.

The party had been obliged to make a détour from the direct road to Mequinez, for fear of the Ait Amore, who, report said, had defeated a body of troops that the Sultan had sent against them, and had even issued from their strongholds in the hills, and were ravaging the country west of the capital.

Although anxious to communicate with, and obtain assirtance from his friend, the Berber chieftain, the young rais thought it best to conform to the unanimous advice of his own officers, and of the guard furnished him by the Bashaw of Salee, and alter his route to tbe capital. In the first place, he felt the necessity of extreme caution to allay suspicion of his motives and objects; and, in the second place, he did not like to risk an encounter with the mountaineers unless they should be under the immediate command of their chief. Hassan judged it most prudent to yield to the suggestions of a détour; but to despatch a message by a Berber of a tribe with whom the Moors were at peace, to acquaint Casbin Subah with his movements, and and to request his assistance.

The road, or rather bridle-track, leaving the shelter of the cork woods, now entered upon a small open plain. As they came out, so as to have a clear horizon, the first file halted at the sight of a dozen horses, who came galloping over the hills from a quarter indicating that they too had come, although by a different road, from Salee. In a few moments it was seen that they were Moors, although at the first glance the rais had indulged a hope that it might be the advance guard of Casban Subah, and his countenance fell when he recognized in the leader of the approaching troop the kaid of the slaves. The kaid, however, seemed to have no hostile intentions. Saluting the young rais, as if nothing to mar their harmony had occurred between them, he passed on and mingled with the soldiers of the escort.

"Son of a burnt grandfather," muttered Hassan, "your politeness shall not impose upon me. You have some scheme of revenge in your head, but I shall watch you."

Eagerly the rais scanned the horizon, but there was no sign of the Berber chief. "He ought to meet us here if anywhere," he whispered to Isabel, "God grant that he received my message. If he comes we will fly to the hills, and there we may bid defiance to this kaid and even to the Sultan himself."

"God grant that it may be as you wish," replied Isabel, "but what chance of escape from the hills? Shall we not be shut up in the mountains for life? I have heard that no Christain captive ever obtains his freedom except through the agency of the Fathers of the Redemption."

"Never fear, señorita; if we can secure the protection of the chief of the Beni Mozarg, we shall have time to look about us, and, trust me, some opportunity will offer by which you may leave the country, notwithstanding the jealous watchfulness of the Moors. But to fly, we must keep the wings of desire feathered with the plumes of freedom, and then the higher the start the more easy it will be to sweep over the dangerous lowlands."

"Who and what is this mountain chief?" suddenly exclaimed Juanita, as the rais paused after his metaphorical flight. "Is he old or young, savage or civilized? I have been told that the people of Mount Atlas are much more barbarous than the Moors."

"Whoever told you so, señorita," replied Hassan, "does them great injustice. True, there are very different degrees of civilization prevailing among the numerous tribes and families into which they are divided. The Beni Mozarg, a branch of the great tribe of Ait Amore, are as far removed from barbarism as the inhabitants of any district of your own Spain. Much of this is due to their position; within a day's ride of Mequinez, easily accessible, and yet easily defensible, they have enjoyed many advantages over their brethren who have maintained their freedom and ignorance in the deeper recesses of the mountains. Much is also due to their late *amekran* or chief, and to his son, the present amekran H'rushe, or as he is called by Moors, *Casbin ibn Sibah Tedla*, or Casbin the Lion of the Atlas, and well does he deserve the title. There is not a Berber chief so dreaded and hated by the Sultan."

"Is he young or old?" demanded Juanita.

"In years he is but a youth," replied the rais, "but in wis-

dom, prudence and fame he is as old as the oldest. He has been in your country, too, Señorita, and speaks Spanish well. Look out for your heart when you encounter him. I see that you are beginning to feel an interest in him even now," continued Hassan, his compased features relaxing into a pleasant smile, "Have a care, Señorita, the Berber has that in his eyes that is said to frighten the boldest lion—and what frightens lions is very apt to soften women's hearts."

"Fear not for me, Señor, if we are going into the mountains there will be, I suspect, much more danger to apprehend from the lion than his master. But tell me, is your hero as handsome as he is brave and accomplished ?"

"His face is perfect—his form faultless."

"Ha, I tremble—what say you, Isabel, can we trust ourselves in the presence of such a paragon ?"

"You must take care of yourself," replied Isabel, raising her eyes to the face of the rais, while a slight blush qualified the smile with which she spoke. "As for me, I apprehend no danger were he twice the hero he appears to be."

"But he is as gentle and kind-hearted as he is handsome, I suppose," said Juanita; "all heroes are so. Oh! I wish he would come. I don't feel the least afraid of him. Santa Maria I know will protect me; and, besides, he is your friend, you say."

"We were companions in boyhood when I dwelt among the Berbers of Tedla. I took him in my galley to Algiers, whence he embarked for Sicily and Spain, on a visit to the monuments of his Berber and Vandal ancestors, who once ruled as conquerors over those fair lands. Since then there have but few messages passed between us, but my heart would be as lead did I think that the rust of absence had eaten through the strong links in the chain of our friendship."

Hassan again stretched himself up in his stirrups and strained his eyes over the plain, but still no sign of the Berber. The rais began to entertain the conviction that his message had miscarried, or that it had found the Berber not in a condition to afford him assistance, in which case there would be no alternative to moving on with his captives to the city.

As the party proceeded they passed a douah where were assembled the inhabitants of several other villages, all of whom were actively engaged in celebrating the marriage of

the sheik's son. A party of young men were busily employed in loading and firing three or four old muskets; others were industriously extracting as much noise as possible, by the aid of crooked sticks, from a couple of drums. Guitars, tambourines, and reed flutes, added to the harmony; while a noisy group were engaged in playing a game of ball, the skill of which consisted in striking the ball with the sole of the foot, and knocking it perpendicularly into the air.

Upon the appearance of the Christians all amusements were suspended, and men, women and children, rushed to see the dogs of unbelievers. Curses and imprecations, and even sticks and stones, were showered upon them without mercy, and it was only by quickening their pace, and hurrying them beyond the reach of the infuriated mob, that the guards could save their prisoners from serious maltreatment.

Toward night the sanctuary of the renowned Muley Idris came in sight, and a city named after the same saint, which stands on the slope of Zarhon, one of the offshoots of the Atlas. The travelers were going on to encamp under the walls of this great city, but were prevented by the people in charge of the sanctuary, who would not permit the pollution of so sacred a place by the nearer approach of the Christians.

The camp was at length selected about a league from the city, on ground covered with magnificent ruins. Hundreds of marble columns, numerous square blocks of stone, and two porticos thirty feet high, attesting the size and splendor of what the natives call the *Kassar Farawan*, or the castle of Pharaoh—a structure probably of the days when Mauritania was a Roman province.

A small tent had been provided for the sisters—an attention that excited a good deal of remark among the followers of the rais, and not a little curiosity to see the beauty that could induce a pious Mohammedan to treat with so much consideration the women of the Kaffirs. The anxiety of Hassan prevented sleep. All night he kept on the look-out for some sign of the Berber. It was now four hours' journey to Mequinez, and unless the chieftain appeared before noon of the coming day, it would be necessary to enter the city, surrender his male prisoners, and trust to the caprices of the Sultan for permission to retain the guardianship of the sisters.

"If it were not for this black scoundrel, the kaid of the slaves, all would go right," thought Hassan, as he coiled

himself beside a fallen column in the attitude of sleep, but with eyes and ears open for the slightest movement.

At the first glimmering of dawn the camp was aroused; the slaves were marshaled in traveling order; the tent of the sisters was struck, and the mules brought up and saddled. Juanita was first helped to her seat by the rais, and he was turning to perform the same office for her sister, when suddenly a tremendous uproar arose at the head of the column —shouts, blows and imprecations, mingled with loud calls for Hassan Herach, arrested the movements of the rais.

"Rest here for a moment, and you, Selim, look well to their safety," exclaimed Hassan, "while I see what this disturbance is about."

Hassan darted off in the direction of the hubbub; and the few Moors standing by, with the exception of Selim, followed his example.

At this instant a horse, with his rider, turned an angle of the ruined masonry, and, leaping a prostrate column, was brought crouching instantaneously to a stand, by the side of the mule on which was seated the younger sister. So sudden was his appearance that it seemed as if he had leaped down from the top of the lofty portico.

Throwing his arm round the waist of Juanita, the rider whirled her from her seat, and placed her before him. Selim made a spring at the horse's head; but dropping the reins, and driving the sharp corners of his stirrup irons into the side of his barb, the horseman dealt the black a blow in the face with his fist that felled him to the ground, and then shooting by him, like an arrow, disappeared in the deep gloom of the early dawn, amid the labyrinth of ruins and bushes.

A shriek from Isabel brought Hassan back to her side.

"Juanita! gone!" he exclaimed, "where is the kaid of the slaves!" and, like a flash, the whole plot burst upon him. The hubbub in the camp had been created by the followers of the kaid to attract his attention, and allow their master to seize one of the sisters. The plan was partly one of revenge for the insult he had received; and partly one of intense desire to possess a captive beautiful enough to deserve the care evinced by Hassan.

"Seize and bind the dogs!" shouted Hassan to the guards; "cut them down, if they resist; on my head be the blame."

The followers of the kaid, who were preparing to mount their horses, were at once seized and bound. The promptitude with which the energetic order was obeyed, took them somewhat by surprise; there was no resistance, and not one succeeded in getting away after his master.

Giving strict orders that no one should stir from the camp, and leaving Isabel, trembling and speechless, in charge of Selim and a confidential officer of the corsair, the rais hurriedly drew off with the mounted men belonging to his own crew. His orders were short, and to the purpose: "One of you follow me—the rest divide into parties of two each—take different directions, spare not the spur, and cut down the black scoundrel without hesitation. Away with you! a thousand metcals of gold to him who brings back the maiden!"

It was rapidly growing lighter; but, although there was a wide view over the plain of Muley Idris, there was no kaid to be seen. The pursuing parties spurred off in different directions, the rais choosing that in which the kaid had been seen to depart. He had not gone far, however, before he perceived that from the nature of the ground, cut up as it was into ravines and watercourses, the chance of overhauling the kaid before reaching the wooded slopes of the hills was a poor one.

"It would need a hundred men," he muttered through his clenched teeth. "Son of Ebliss! may I be doubly cursed of Mohammed and Christ but you shall rue this day!"

The sun was now above the horizon, and eagerly the young rais strained his eyes, practised in the long vision of the sailor, over the wide expanse that, as he rose the numerous hillocks of the plain, was exposed to view. He could see the ruins of Kassar Farawan, and the moving figures of his Moorish guards and their prisoners, and, far in the distance, there were horsemen scouring the country at full speed. Several parties of Arabs, men and women, bearing burdens on their heads, and driving before them their little donkeys laden with articles for the market of Muley Idris were encountered, but none of them had seen the object of his search.

A slight clue was afforded by a man who was ploughing by means of a crooked wooden stick, to which were harnessed a couple of cows, by ropes fastened to their horns. The man was entirely naked. A woman in nearly an equal state of

nudity (permitting a view, common in Barbary, of several crosses tattooed upon the skin), followed with a basket of barley, which she distributed in the furrows, or rather scratches, made by the primitive plough.

To the anxious questionings of Hassan he replied, that he had seen a mounted djin flit by him in the gray of the morning, bearing a large burden before him; but that if it was he that his questioner was in search of, he must have had time to reach the cork woods on the slope of the hill—where pursuit, even with a thousand men, would be hopeless.

CHAPTER XI.

LIKE all his countrymen, the kaid was a bold rider. His steed was one of the best from the Sultan's stables at Maraskin. He had also the advantage of a good start, and an intimate knowledge of the ground. Keeping to the labyrinth of watercourses made by the Winter tributaries of the Ordom, he directed his flight for the hills, where he expected to be joined by his followers; and then to make his way unto Mequinez in time to forestall the rais with the jealous Sultan.

For a long time Juanita lay insensible in his arms, and when she did recover she found herself so firmly grasped, and so tightly muffled in her haick, that at first she was incapable of motion. But with returning consciousness returned a good portion of her natural courage and resolution. She addressed the kaid in Spanish; but, unlike the town Moors, he could speak nothing but Arabic, in which language he sternly enjoined silence, and fiercely spurred on. Juanita understood the injunction; and at once she shouted, at the top of her lungs,, as they dashed by two or three black tents, in front of which were seated some women engaged in making butter, by shaking and thumping goat-skin bags filled with milk. A muttered curse, and a blow on the mouth, were followed by a tighter grasp of her person, and away the gallant barb bounded beyond the reach of aid from the douah.

Juanita bethought herself of her dagger; and with right good will would she have used it could she have drawn it from beneath the folds of her dress.

The kaid, having reached the ascending ground, forced his horse, for a short distance, up the dry bed of a mountain torrent; and then wheeling him to an eminence covered with tall palmetto bushes, paused for a moment to look back. He saw the horsemen of the rais scouring the plain; he saw the rais himself, and knew from his movements that he was completely at fault, and shaking his bridle-hand contemptuously, and muttering an Arabic imprecation, he turned and spurred among the winding glades of the ilex and cork forest.

For full a quarter of an hour the kaid kept on at full speed; when suddenly he checked his steed by the banks of a small stream, aud swinging Juanita to the ground, dismounted, and secured his horse.

"Come," he exclaimed, "let me see what my prize is worth;" and, advancing, he seized her haick, and with no gentle grasp, tore it away from her face.

Juanita's limbs were stiffened by the compressien and jolting of her short but desperate ride; and her spirit froze within her as she caught a full sight of the negro's ugly and malignant visage, seamed as it was with the small-pox, and marked by the play of the most sensual passions. She tottered backward, and would have fallen had she not caught for support at the trunk of a tree.

The kaid, on his part, was not less astonished. He was a great admirer of Christian beauty; but he had formed no idea of such loveliness; and he paused, for a moment, in delighted contemplation of something so new, and so fresh, so different from anything that he had before seen

"There are no heaven and no houris in the next world," he muttered, "for the Christians—may the curse of the Prophet rest on them forever—and so God sends them good-looking women in this. No wonder the rais—may my dagger some day blush with his heart's blood—no wonder he wished to pluck this flower of the Kaffir for himself. Can the other be equal to her? By the beard of the prophet I will have her, too."

The kaid again advanced toward Juanita. There was something in the gleam of his eye that roused to desperation the indomitable spirit of the young girl, and starting to her feet, she drew the dagger from beneath her dress, and made a furious blow at his breast. The will was good, but her arm

wanted force; and, springing back, the astonished and enraged negro escaped with but a slight wound. Again he advanced upon her; but Juanita, by flourishing the dagger, kept him at bay.

The contest could not have lasted long, as the strength of the young girl was beginning to fail her, and the kaid was already looking around for a stick with which to beat down her guard, when suddenly a new comer appeared upon the scene—so suddenly and so noiselessly, that he seemed to Juanita's eyes to have arisen from the ground.

He was a middle-sized figure, clad in a coarse gray djellabeah, the hood of which was drawn so far over his head as to completely conceal his features. He was mounted upon a tall black barb. A long musket rested across his lap, and at his saddle-bow rested an old-fashioned Arabic war-club, with a steel head, a most formidable weapon when wielded in the close *melee*, or when hurled with unerring precision in the chase.

Quietly he sat upon his motionless steed and looked at the two before him. The instant Juanita's eyes caught sight of him, she dropped her dagger and shrieked to him to aid her, and then the impossibility of making known her story in Arabic flashed upon her; her lips became blanched and silent, and her heart sank in despair. The next instant the recollection of the corsair's name came to her mind, and she started forward repeating the words rais, Hassan Herach, and pointing in the direction of the ruins of Kassar Farawan.

"Speak Spanish, señorita," exclaimed the horseman, "I understand it. Tell me how it is that you are here, and why you use the name of the famous rover of Salee?"

It would be impossible to describe the sudden revulsion of feeling, from despair to hope, that came over the maiden's heart as the full mellow tones of the stranger's voice fell upon her ear. Rapidly she ran over the leading points of her story.

"Enough, señorita," exclaimed the horseman, with a courteous wave of his hand. "Calm yourself now. You can tell me more when I have sent this hound to his kennel."

Deliberately turning to the kaid, who had hardly had time to make up his mind as to how he should receive any interference in the affair, the stranger pointed to his horse and sternly ordered him to mount.

"And who are you," demanded the negro, "who dares to

order Hammed ben Slowick, chief kaid of the slaves? On your head be any interference between me and my slave."

Without a word, the stranger lightly sprang to the ground, leaving the gun and battle-club suspended to the saddle-bow. The kaid drew his sword, but the stranger, unheeding the action, advanced with a peculiarly elastic and vigorous step until within three or four feet, when he stopped, drew back the hood of his djellabeah a little, and spoke a few words in a low tone.

The kaid's face grew almost white with terror. His lips quivered and his eye-balls started from his head, as with trembling steps he retreated backward until he reached his horse. Once fairly in the saddle, he hesitated for a moment. The stranger waved his hand impatiently, and with a groan of mingled rage and fear, the kaid gave the rein to his horse, and set off at full speed.

The noise of his horse's hoofs died away among the echoes of the forest. The stranger threw himself upon the ground and lay for a few moments with his ear pressed to the earth.

"Right," he exclaimed, rising; "he has taken the path for Mequinez. He will trouble us no more."

Advancing to Juanita, he took her hand, and quietly leading her to a bank of turf bordering the rushing stream, requested her to be seated. "Compose yourself, fair maiden," said the stranger, addressing her with a tone and air decidedly chivalresque. "Have no further fear. You are here as safe as you would be in the groves of the Guadalete. You can trust me."

"Oh, I do!" exclaimed Juanita, earnestly; "most fully, most perfectly."

The stranger seemed somewhat amused with her impulsive and energetic reply. "And yet, señorita, you know nothing of me—you have hardly seen my features—"

"But I have heard your voice," interrupted the young girl, "and I cannot be mistaken; oh! I am sure that no cruelty or treachery can lurk in such a voice."

"'Tis the Spanish words, fair maiden—'tis the sound of your native language that, perhaps, deceives you—you forget that I am a Moor."

The stranger threw back upon his shoulders the deep hood of his djellabeah, and exposed a head and face that might have served for a model of an Antinous in bronze. The features

were perfectly regular and very youthful; a wide smooth forehead, partially concealed by the folds of the turban; a nose aquiline and exquisitely formed, and lips short, curved, and moderately full, were well set off by jetty brows, mustache and beard. It was the eye, however, that was the most striking feature. It was not black, but a blue so deep and clear as to have the same effect, except when, in some lights, the bluish tints flashed out in incongruous contrast to the deep bronze of the complexion.

It was this complexion that proved in Juanita's eyes, as she contemplated for a moment the features of the young man, the only drawback to his beauty: not that it was too dark, but it was so unnatural, so untransparent, so much like a painted complexion.

The stranger hesitated for a moment, and then a twinkle of boyish glee played in the depths of his blue eye. Without a word he raised his hand, and seizing his cap and turban threw them upon the ground. This movement, which would have served to reveal the closely cropped head of a Moor, liberated a profusion of yellowish auburn hair that fell in clustering curls over his brow and a-down his neck.

The incongruity of light hair with a black beard and skin was complete, and gave to the young man a singular and somewhat comical appearance in the eyes of the puzzled Juanita.

The stranger watched her bewildered look for a moment, and then burst into a low mirthful laugh, while his large eyes sparkled with the spirit of fun. There was something so genial, so good-humored, and so boyish in his tones, that Juanita was compelled to join him, although she would have found it difficult to tell what they were laughing at.

"The señorita hardly knows what to think of such an odd-looking being," said the stranger, "but if she will rest here for a moment, I will endeavor to make myself look a little less like a *mamarracho* or an *enmascarado*. I am growing too anxious for your approving glances, señorita, to bate any of my natural advantages."

So saying, he rose, and, advancing to the brink of the stream, sprang lightly down the bank to the water. Here he produced from a pouch at his girdle a piece of the argillaceous saponaceous earth used as a cosmetic by the ladies of

Morocco, and proceeded to wash away the temporary coloring materials that darkened his skin and beard.

It would have been difficult for Juanita, had she been much more practised in such matters than she was, to have analyzed the feelings with which she awaited the return of her singular companion. Hope, confidence, curiosity, wonder, exercised her mind, and then came fear—fear that she was dreaming—that her protector had deserted her, and that the kaid would return.

Her apprehensions, however, endured but for a moment, for seizing the projecting arm of a dwarf oak, the stranger leaped, with a bound light as that of a gazelle, to the top of the bank, and stood before her.

His appearance was now much more youthful—certainly not over twenty-two or twenty-three years. His beard, full and curling, was of the color of his hair, while his skin was clear and ruddy, although somewhat darkened by exposure to the sun.

He threw himself upon the ground at the feet of Juanita.

"And what does the señorita think now?" he demanded. "Am I a Moor?"

"I know not what to think," replied Juanita. "You cannot be a Moor, and you certainly are not a Spaniard, although you speak the language so fluently."

"And yet, señorita, you can trust me! You, so young, so lovely, lovely even beyond the fairest creature of my dreams, are not afraid of me? a stranger—alone, in this forest! Know you not, señorita, that it was not unfrequently the custom for distressed damsels to reward the knights who succored them."

There was a slight tone of mockery in his voice that brought the tear to Juanita's eye. Her lips trembled with vexation as she replied:

"Recreant knights, false to honor and to beauty, only, could exact rewards for services in time of need to my sex. No! I can trust you, but if I could not I am not afraid of you. You forget that I have my dagger."

"A poor guard, señorita, to those ripe lips of yours," laughed the stranger. "Why in a moment more, if I had not arrived, the kaid would have forced the weapon out of your hand, and you would have been at the mercy of an infuriated beast."

"True," replied Juanita, "because, in that case, the blind instinct was to strike at the attacking animal; but if you—"

"Well, what then? Suppose I stood in the kaid's place," demanded the stranger, and a slight sneer curled his curved upper lip.

"Then—then I would strike the dagger into my own heart," exclaimed Juanita, passionately, and overcome by her vexation, she burst into a flood of tears."

"*Buono! buono!* señorita," said the stranger, clapping his hands, "I like the distinction—I appreciate the compliment! But," he continued, in the gentlest tones "why these tears? I meant not to offend you. I believe you to be as pure and good as you are lovely. Think equally well of me, I will deserve your good opinion. But you must needs know more of me. Hast ever heard of the Berbers?"

"The mountaineers of the Atlas?"

"The same Berbers, or Brebbers, they are called by the Moors and Arabs; but among themselves they know not the name. Their true title is *Amazerg*, the noble, or *Amaergt*, the free. Among the hills I am an Amazerg"—and, as he spoke, the stranger's eye glanced with a flash of pride—"here, I am a Berber."

"And the amekran of the Beni Mozarg," said Juanita.

The young man started with an expression of surprise; and then, bowing, he replied, "Your wit flies as straight and as true to my title as the glances of your eyes do to my heart. The amekranelarch of the Beni Mozarg, is at your feet, señorita."

Juanita's eyes fell beneath the steady look of admiration that rested on her face; and a slight blush was the only reply to the compliment.

"And is this a mark of the Berber blood?" she said, after a pause, slightly touching the masses of golden curls that fell aside his cheek; "methought they were a dark-haired race."

"There are differences in the tribes," replied the Berber; "our people have never been conquered; but they have more or less felt the influence of the tides of conquest that have, in different ages, swept over the lowlands between the foot of our mountains and the Mediterranean. First came the Carthagenians, then the Romans, and then the Vandals. With these latter, my own tribe, the Beni Mozarg, had inti-

mate relations. A chieftain of the Mozarg married a daughter of Genseric, and 'tis the blood of that conqueror that makes my skin lighter than my kindred of the tribes. But you seem interested in what I say of my people, and well you may; I doubt not that Berber blood flows in your veins."

"In mine," exclaimed Juniata, "how can that be?"

"You are an Andalusian, and you doubtless have heard how the Saracens once conquered the greater part of Spain, and how the traces of the Arabic race can be perceived in the present inhabitants of the Southern half of the peninsula. But it is all false; 'twas the Berbers who conquered Spain. 'Twas the Berbers, in the gallant bands of Tarik Ibn Zeyed and his master, Mirza Ibn Nasseyr, who overthrew the Gothic monarchy in Spain. 'Twas the Berbers who composed the vast array that, under Yusef Ibn Tashfir, defeated the hosts of Alfonzo on the field of Zalaca. 'Twas the Berbers who, under the great Yakoob Almanzor, routed the King of Castile on the plains of Alarcos, aad who swept triumphant through the country to the hills of Asturias; and it was the Berbers who followed Mohammed Ibn Abdallah by hundreds of thousands to the fields of Las Narvas."

The eye of the Berber flashed, and his countenance glowed with a stern and lofty expression that it would in moments of repose seem almost impossible for his features to assume. Suddenly his expression changed, and he uttered again his peculiar boyish laugh. "Pardon me, señorita," he said, taking her hand. "I am getting patriotic and heroic when I ought to be gallant and sentimental, but it is a mood I am apt to fall into."

"It suits you," returned Juanita, smiling, "and I like it; although, as a true Spaniard, when you boast of the conquest of my country by the Berbers, I might ask who it was that beat them back to their own mountains? I might ask how it is that they now suffer the dominion of the Moor?"

"The dominion of the Moor! Never. In the hills we are as free as we have ever been since our tribes first came from the East, long before the Phœnician stranded his bark upon the shore of Carthage. But in the smaller hills and on the plains, where our people have mixed with other populations, we give a nominal submission. Even that, however, is wholly due to the deadly feuds of our tribes; and mark me,

Señorita, the day will come when the Berbers will know the power of union, and then—"

The young man paused; and again, relapsing into his boyish tone, he exclaimed gaily, "But, senorita, this is idle talk, when we should be thinking of a fitting termination to your adventure. You have the choice of two courses, either to go with me to my kassar, where you will be in perfect safety, or to rejoin your sister and the rais Herach."

"Oh let us go to my sister," exclaimed Isabel.

"And if you go to her, you will have to go with her to Mequinez. There you will be exposed to dangers which I doubt whether the rais will have power to protect you from. The kaid will be there. I easily frightened him away, because I have the reputation of being in league with the Evil One, and the Moors are terribly superstitious; but I am afraid that he will not so easily give you up within the walls of the city."

Juanita paused, and looked for a moment on the ground. As she raised her eyes, she caught the inquiring glances of the Berber fixed upon her, and noticed something of the same mocking expression that had once before attracted her attention.

"I will go to my sister," impetuously exclaimed Juanita: "her fate shall be mine."

"But you forget, señorita; her fate may be to be the wife of Hassan; and from what you have told me, I gather that it would not much displease her. Your fate may be to be the slave of the kaid."

"I will go to my sister," exclaimed Juanita, clutching the hilt of the dagger.

"'Tis well, Señorita. Here, Boroon! Boroon!"—and the horse, who had not stirred from the spot where his master had left him, came trotting up, like a dog, at the call. "'Tis well, Señorita; but I have traveled in your country, and I saw but few damsels who, in your case, would have decided against my kassar. Come, Señorita, a short ride, and then—"

The sentence remained unfinished. Bending from his saddle, the young man seized Juanita around the waist, and with singular ease and dexterity raised her from the ground and placed her on the croup of the horse behind him.

"Hold fast by the folds of my sash," he exclaimed, "and fear not. Boroon would hardly shake a feather from him;"

and drawing his hood far over his face, he gave the word to his steed, which at once stretched out in a long skimming pace that soon carried Juanita clear of the forest by a wide open path running almost at right angles to the one by which she had entered.

A half hour's gallop through the open country, during which no words had been spoken, except a few questions and answers as to the brother of the rais, Edward Carlyle, when suddenly the Berber drew rein upon the brow of an eminence that commanded a view of the wide plain.

"Do you see that troop of horsemen?" he said, indicating the object he mentioned with his hand, "that is the cavalcade of Hassan Herach. They will come directly beneath this hill. Keep yourself out of sight until they are near enough to make sure that your sister and the rais are present. It will not suit my purposes to be seen. I will watch you from yonder cliff until you join them. Tell the rais that I received his message not three hours since, but that I knew not the assistance he required. My people have retreated to the hills. It would take three or four days to collect force enough to overpower so large an escort as accompanies the captives of the rais. Tell him, however, to be of good heart, and that I may be of service to him even yet. Say to him that I will meet him in Mequinez. And now, señorita, adieu. Forget me not, and be sure that I shall remember you."

The Berber threw his arm around her waist, and lifting her as if she had been a child, whirled her gently round in front of him, and held her for a moment suspended in the air. He leaned forward and imprinted a kiss upon her lips.

"We shall meet again," he murmured—"Adieu!" and then lowering her to the ground, struck his spurs into his horse, and was off like a bird on the wing.

Poor Juanita! for some minutes she stood bewildered—stupefied—gazing after the flying steed and its strange rider. It seemed a dream, yet there could be no doubt of the reality. The glowing kiss of the stranger had passed the portals of her pouting lips, and burned like a coal at her heart.

CHAPTER XII.

THE first, greatest, and most essential requisite in writing a novel, is, that the writer should have a story to tell, and that he should tell it. Long-drawn descriptions of character or scenery, fine-spun samples of sentiment, historical disquisitions or philosophical essays, no writer of a novel has any title to inflict upon his readers. But while maintaining this view of the author's privileges, and the reader's rights, to a degree far beyond what the common practices of the day require, it must nevertheless be admitted, that at times the current of the story may be arrested, for a few moments, for explanations, and remarks essential to the full comprehension of plot, character, or situation. If this is true under ordinary circumstances, it is peculiarly so in the present case, when the course of the story brings upon the scene a specimen of a people so little known to most readers as the inhabitants of Mount Atlas; and no further apology will be, perhaps, necesssary for devoting a page or two concentrating the few rays of light that have been collected by D'Avazac, Graberg, Venture, Hodgson, Delaporte and other learned philologists and ethnographers.

The whole range of the Atlas is inhabited by a most ancient people—the Numidians and Mauritanians, *genus insuperabile bello* of the Roman writers. In Algiers they are now familiar to the public under the name of the Kabyles—literally, "the tribes." In the northern part of Morocco, in the kingdom of Fez, they are known as Berbers, Brebbers, or Baraba. In the Southern and Western valleys of the Atlas, below the city of Morocco, and particularly in the provinces of Hhahha, Soos, and Guzzula, they are called Shellooh.

The Kabyles, the Berbers, and the Shellooh, speak distinct dialects—so much so, that it is said they cannot readily hold communication with each other; but it is now pretty well ascertained that these dialects are radically the same language; and that to this same old, widely-diffused Berber language

belongs the Terguah, or the dialect of the Tuarycks, the great nomadic tribes of the desert of Sahara—the Mozabeeah, or idiom of the Beni Mozab, on the northern fringe of the desert, and the Sergoo, spoken in the neighborhood of Timbuctoo.

The origin of the Berbers is involved in the greatest obscurity. According to their own traditions, and the assertions of Arabic historians, they come from Canaan. One account represents their ancestors as a colony of Philistines who fled to Africa upon the death of Goliath. Another makes them the descendants of the Amalekites and Canaanites, who were driven out by Joshua. This is the opinion of Procopius, who accompanied Belisarius in his African wars, and who asserts that he himself saw two columns of marble at Tangier bearing the inscription, "We are the Canaanites who fled before Joshua the son of Nun, the notorious robber." The testimony of Procopious, at least, serves to show that the tradition of the Canaanitish origin of the Berber is as old as the fifth century, and renders it possible that a Philistine emigration did take place in the time of Joshua, although there can be no doubt that the country was then inhabited by tribes of a similar race, coming by successive emigrations long before from the East.

The traditions of the Shellooh favor this supposition. They consider themselves the most ancient people, and represent themselves as descended from Mazeg, son of Canaan; while their Northern neighbors are Philistines, descended from Casluhim, son of Misraim, The probabilities are, that the great aboriginal white race, the Mazigh, was made up by repeated emigrations from the coasts of the Levant at a date long anterior to the earliest historical period, in the same way that the Arabic elements of the lowlands of Northern Barbary are due to emigrations long anterior to the invasion of the country by the converts of Mohammed. One of the earliest of these Arabian eruptions was that of Melek Afriki, who came at the head of five tribes, the Senhaga, Massmudah, Zeneta, Hawarah, and Gumerah, the *quinquegentani* of the Romans. These Arabian emigrants probably mixed readily with the Canaanitish inhabitants of the plains, as succeeding emigrants have done; and this mixed race constitute what is known as the Moorish or Arabic population, entirely distinct from the aboriginal Berber.

Like their brethren, the Kabyles, and the Shelloohs, the Berbers are divided into tribes, between whom interminable feuds exist, some of which date back as far the era of Mohammed. An almost continued state of hostility is the consequence, and though capable of patching up a peace and uniting for resistance to an invader, the instant the external pressure is removed, the tribes resolve themselves into their varying elements, and the old feuds break out. It has ever been the policy of the Emperors of Morocco to encourage these feuds, and to fan the flames of family hate, as by that means they can secure a nominal authority over a few of the tribes, with, in some cases, a slight tribute from the most accessible. Many families of the Berbers, however, live in entire independence under their *amekrans* or *amgars*, and frequently a tribe or tribes wage desperate war with the Moors. Could the Berbers drop their hereditary family quarrels, and unite for any length of time, the Moorish dominion in Morocco would soon be at an end—the Berbers and Shelloohs numbering full one-half of the population, and being by far the most energetic and warlike race.

The Berbers are a remarkably well-proportioned race, robust, active, lively and bold, with light complexions, many of them having hair as light as the people of Northern Europe. Morgan, who resided forty years in Barbary, in his curious and quaintly written history of Algiers, says: "I have never met with any North Britain, Dane, or any other, more carroty and freckled than I have known whole families of these mountaineers and others who have owned their descent from thence; and among the Arabs I never could light on one whose hair was not either jet black, or, at least, dark brown. These are generally swarthy, as are their Asiatic kindred, yet some of them have skins tolerably clear—nay, many of them far exceeding abundance of Southern Europeans. Again, as I said, many of the natural Africans, by mixing with the black slaves, together with being in a manner always exposed to the scorching sunbeams, have negro's features and a very dusky hue. But what numbers of natural Africans have I not seen, particularly females, who, for well-featured countenances, fair curling locks, and wholesome ruddy looks, might vie with, and even be envied by the proudest European belles, who are hourly persecuted by crowds of sighing, languishing admirers."

The Shelloohs are darker, although neither of them have anything in their personal appearance resembling the so-called Berbers or Brabra of Nubia. A peculiarly sinister and cruel expression of the eye, it has been said, is a characteristic. This is perhaps true of the Kabyles, but it is not so general with the Berbers, among whom the physiognomy of different tribes varies considerably, owing somewhat, it may be, to causes at work anterior to the historic period, but most probably to a greater or less contamination of some of the tribes by Punic, Roman, Arabic, Yandalic and Gothic blood.

But whether the Berbers have the sinister look of their Algerine brethren or not, certain it is that the instinct of cruelty is fully developed in many of them in the present day, and particularly among that portion of them who are nearest to European civilization. The Reefians, or inhabitants of the great spur of the Atlas that stretches down to the Straits of Gibraltar, have as bad a reputation as any people in Barbary. The most inhospitable and dangerous place for shipwrecked Christians on the whole coast of Africa is beyond doubt within the Straits, almost under the guns of Gibraltar, at the foot of Abyla, now Djebel Moussa or Ape's Hill, one of the famous pillars of Hercules. May it not be that the Reefians owe their reputation for a degree of inhumanity, cupidity and faithlessness, that does not belong to the inland tribes, to their closer intercoursd with the Carthagenians, whose great city of Tingis, fabled to have been surrounded by walls of brass, lay but a few miles from their hills.

Among the Berbers, in the present day, the Mohammedan religion prevails, mixed up, however, with many old peculiar notions and observances, some of which unquestionably date their origin from the time when the whole of Northern Africa was nominally Christian. Nominally, we say, for there is good reason to believe that a large proportion of the population, especially in the mountains, were as thorough-going Christian-haters in the times of St. Augustine as they are in the present day. A few tribes are yet strongly Pagan, and it is more than probable that a few others still hold Christian doctrine, though by this time, perhaps, it could scarcely be recognized as such, in its impure and adulterated forms.

In general the Berbers are not good horsemen; but some

of the tribes have horses and riders that excel the best among the Moors. They are very expert marksmen, and very fond of their weapons, and of military games and exercises. High up in the mountains they frequently live in natural caverns, or in artificial caves dug out in the faces of the cliffs; but in the valleys and on the plateaux, they have villages constructd of wood and stone, thatched with straw, and loopholed for purposes of defence.

Immense herds of cattle and flocks of sheep afford a means of subsistence; and they are also abundantly supplied with asses and mules. Manufactures are, of course, in no very flourishing condition; but they are not far behind those of the Moors. They can spin, weave, smelt iron, and make their own arms; and, if not equal to the town Moors in all departments of industry, are far before the Arabs or tent-dwelling Moors of the plains.

Among the Berbers there live a great many Jews, whose condition is infinitely better than that of their brethren among the Moors. A relation, like that of patron and client, exists —each Jew has a Berber patron who is bound to protect him from insult and oppression, even at the expense of his own life. The Jew, in the towns, is insulted, oppressed, robbed with impunity, but among the Berbers he lives in security of life and property, and on terms of perfect social equality. These Jews are looked upon as heretics by the Moorish Jews, who stigmatize them as Philistines. A good understanding, however, exists, and it is no uncommon thing for the Philistines to mingle freely with the town Jews in the pursuits of trade.

Such are the Berbers of the Atlas, in our day; and such in general have they ever been. In the case of tribes, like the Beni Mozarg, brought more intimately in contact with the hosts of the different invaders that have swept along the southern shores of the Mediterranean, there has been undoubtedly a higher stage of civilization than at present. The ferocious bigotry of Mohammedanism, and the jealous cruelty of an ignorant despotism have, year by year, and day by day, exerted an increasing energy in demoralizing and barbarizing the Moors; and it may well be conceived that an influence of a similar kind must have swept out of existence some of the habits, tastes and ideas of the Berbers; but, in the main, as they are now, so were they then.

Except the change in the artificial landmarks of the country, the greater infusion of the Arabic element into the language of the lowlands—the substitution of the prayers of El Islam for the rites of the pagan—the adoption of fire-arms in place of bows and slings, and the use of saddles—the old Numidians and Mauritanians, with Bocchus and Jugurtha, and Masinissa, and Syphax at their head, would now see, could they start up from their graves, nothing to excite surprise.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE morning was nearly spent, when Hassan, returning to the Kassar Farawan, announced to the distressed Isabel the failure of all attempts to trace the course of the kaid. With a heavy heart the rais gave the order to move forward.

"'Tis our only chance," he exclaimed, "to push on to Mequinez, where I shall see the Sultan at once, and obtain his permission to pursue the kaid—which, by the head of the Prophet, I will do to the ends of the earth. Believe me, señorita, your sister shall yet be restored to you."

Isabel was too deeply in love, and had too much confidence in her lover's judgment and energy not to feel the consoling influence of his assurances; but still her spirits could not rally from the shock—she felt heart-sick—a sensation of faintness spread through her frame; and it was with difficulty, notwithstanding the constant encouraging attentions of the rais, that she could preserve her seat in her saddle.

With a quickened step the calvacade moved on. It was about noon. The road, indicated only by the footprints of men and camels, led directly beneath the steep side of a small eminence. The rais was about to order a halt for refreshment at the base of the precipice, when, suddenly, the steps of all were arrested by a wild shriek from Isabel. Motionless she sat for a moment, gazing upward at the figure of Juanita, who now attracted all eyes, as she stood upon the brink of the hillside. The next instant Isabel sprang from her mule, and before the rais could offer aid or interference, she dashed up the steep sides of the hillock—gullied and scarped by the rains, so that no horse could follow her—and

threw herself, overcome by physical exhaustion and mental emotion, into her sister's arms.

Quick as thought, the rais whirled his horse, and galloping a little distance to where the ascent was not so steep, he spurred up the slope. He was followed by some of the guards.

"Cover your faces, señoritas," he exclaimed. "Quick, you must not be seen by these men, or before sunrise to-morrow all Mequinez will not be large enough to hold the fame of your beauty."

The sisters drew their haicks over their faces, but they still remained clasped in each other's arms.

Hassan sent his men back to the main body with orders for a noontide halt, while he disposed himself to listen to Juanita's account of her adventures.

"No men!" exclaimed the rais, when Juanita delivered the message of the Berber. "Why, I thought he had his whole tribe within call. But he said that he would grant us his assistance even yet?" he eagerly demanded.

"Such were his words," replied Juanita.

"God grant that it may not come too late. And you, señorita, did he make you no assurances at parting?"

The color rushed to Juanita's face, but, drawing her head into the folds of her haick, it escaped observation.

"He said that we should meet again," muttered Juanita.

"Did he?" exclaimed the rais, his eye brightening. "Did he say that? Then we are safe. You wonder at my confidence," he continued, turning to Isabel, "in the indefinite promises of a Berber chief; but if you knew what I know—his power, his boundless resources of mind and person, the facility with which he passes through all parts of the country, the impunity with which he mingles in the very court of the Sultan, the foresight with which he thwarts all plots for his capture, and the dexterity and certainty with which he punishes his enemies and serves his friends—if you knew all this, you, too, would have confidence in him. What say you, Juanita? You have seen him, and can judge something of him. Think you that we can rely upon him?"

"Oh, yes!" exclaimed Juanita, eagerly; "I am certain that he will endeavor to aid us, and I doubt not his power."

"But, to enable him to do so, we must give him time," said Hassan. "The Moors all maintain that he is in com-

pact with the Evil One; but I doubt whether he has any supernatural power; and, while depending ultimately on him, we must look to ourselves for safety in the meantime. You say that the kaid took the road to Mequinez?"

"So said the Berber," replied Juanita.

"The scoundrel has forestalled us, then, with the Emperor, and it will be hardly safe for you to enter the city with these captives. But I have a plan by which you can be secreted for awhile, and which will give time for the favorable events hanging on the bough of hope to ripen and fall."

Calling up Selim, the rais gave him orders to mount, and set out with all speed for Mequinez. "Spare not the spur," he exclaimed, "a hundred ducats, if you convey my message in time. Go to the house of Abdallah—you know it—and say to Abdallah that I must see him to-night. You will come with him, and direct him to the palm grove, at the foot of *Djeblesaghir*, where we shall encamp. Away! and see that you bring him."

Selim waited for no second order; but, mounting, started at full speed for the city, distant about ten miles.

Notwithstanding the impatience of some of the officers of the cavalcade to set out, in the hope of reaching Mequinez that afternoon, it was full two hours after the departure of Selim, before the rais gave the word to move on. The country was rough and uneven, and the movements of the chained slaves necessarily slow, so that the sun was well advanced in the Western arc of his course when the party reached the foot of the Djeblesaghir or Little Hill.

The rais ordered a halt, and announced his intention of camping for the night. The horses were picketed, tents pitched, guards set, and, amid hundreds of half-naked Arabs, who rushed from the neighboring douahs to get sight of the Christians' preparations made for the principal meal of the day, A dozen fires blazed brightly beneath as many large earthen pots, in which were placed pieces of chicken or mutton, with sufficient water and butter for a stew. Stores of cooscoosoo were produced, and when cooked by the steam coming up through the holes of an earthen dish fitting the mouth of the pot, from the savory messes below, were turned out into bowls, and mingled with the fricasseed chicken or mutton. Then bowls were placed upon the ground, and squatting around them, the Moors, with a universal "*Bish-*

millah! in the name of God!" thrust in their hands, and, with a few flourishes, the contents of the whole disappeared. For the Christian captives a scanty supply of mouldy bread and a few jars of rancid butter sufficed.

After supper the sentinels rolled themselves in their haicks and lay motionless, but watchful, on the ground; the rest of the Moors disposed themselves for a talk in several groups. The snuff-box, with the celebrated snuff of Mequinez, was passed about (the Moors neither smoking nor chewing tobacco), while a few produced their pipes for the *kief* or prepared seed of the hemp, and with a few whiffs of the powerful narcotic were floating in an elysium of voluptuous sensation.

About an hour before midnight Selim entered the camp. Advancing to his master, who was on the watch beside the door of the tent allotted to the sisters, he whispered a few words in his ear. Hassan started to his feet and followed the black, who took a path leading through the palm grove over the brow of the hill. They had not gone far when Selim halted, and making a low sound with his mouth, it was answered by the appearance of Abdallah.

Dispensing with the usual courteous compliments of the Moors, Hassan seized Abdallah at once by the haick, and, drawing him aside, began speaking to him rapidly in Spanish.

"You would know why I sent for you," he demanded.

"Your brother?" queried Abdallah. "He is well, and strange to say, evinces no impatience at his confinement. My daughter tries to amuse him with her voice and her guitar, and truly the young man seems pleased with her music."

"No, not my brother, though God be thanked that the son of my mother is safe and well; 'tis another favor that I have to ask of you, but much I fear that the wild steed of desire is leaping the bounds of our friendship."

"Say not so," answered Abdallah. "I owe you much, and do I not live in hopes of some day taking my daughter and fortune from this cursed land only through you? You know the desire of my heart—"

"Yes, and you shall eat of it if I have to pluck it for you from the topmost branches of the tree of danger; but much I fear that what I have to propose will exhaust the well of your kindness. Sending my brother to you was picking the blossoms of charity, but now I am going to pull at the roots. Listen!—"

Dropping his metaphorical style, the rais rapidly ran over all the circumstances with which the reader is familiar, and ended by proposing that the kaid of the gates should take charge of the sisters, escort them into town, and secrete them for a while, at least, in his house.

Abdallah listened in silence. "This is a bad business indeed," he exclaimed, when Hassan had finished, "and dangerous, too. Know you knot that Hammed ben Slowek is all-powerful with the Sultan. He is a saint—Allah's curses on the whole tribe of saintly vagabonds."

"A saint," demanded Hassan, with an expression of alarm in his voice. "A saint? God help us."

And well might the rais feel a thrill of apprehension. The saints of Morocco, were then, as they are now, a numerous body of the most ignorant, malicious, and sordid scoundrels that could be found in all the empire. Their reputation for sanctity enabling them to outrage the strongest prejudices of the Moors—to violate all sense of decency—and to commit the most outrageous crimes with impunity. Those in highest repute are generally descendants of some famous saint of the olden time, although it is possible for any one to take up the trade, and by a few additional prayers, to acquire the title and the privilege of living in idleness upon the alms of the faithful. Maniacs and fools are generally saints by virtue of their infirmities; and their reputation and influence are commonly proportioned to the violence and extravagance of their actions, or the filthiness and impurity of their habits and dress.

"He is a santon," replied Abdallah, "but luckily he inherits his sanctity from no long line of ancestors, nor from any saint of renown. His father was the first saint of his family, and is well remembered as one of the vilest, most malicious scoundrels that ever used a reputed holiness to cover all manner of crimes. The Sultan is, you know, a strict Mohammedan; and although he has no hesitation in violating saints' houses, and even cutting their heads off, when it suits him, he in general affects to be very deferential to the rascals. This Hammen ben Slowek pretends to go every Friday to Mecca, from whence he frequently brings the Sultan presents. Muley Ismael, one would think, has too much sense to believe in the kaid's journeys; but, however that may be,

he pretends that he does, and has, for some time, treated the impostor with strong marks of favor."

"'Tis unfortunate, indeed," exclaimed Hassan; "think you that it will not be best to seek this dog of a santon first, and send him where his saintly pretensions can be better judged of than in this world?"

"No, that would be dangerous, indeed; not only the Sultan, but the populace would be against you."

The worthy kaid of the gates mused for a moment.

"Our only hope," he continued, "is in time and the Berber. He has promised to aid you?"

"He sent me such a message but a few hours since," said Hassan.

"It may be in his power to assist you in a flight to the hills," replied the kaid, in a meditative tone, "and that, perhaps will suit my purpose as well; I may need some help of that kind myself."

"I must try and secrete these damsels," he continued, "for a few days; but not in my own house, that would be a useless risk. Ah! I have a plan; there is a vacant house adjoining mine that I will secure possession of for the purpose. But, be quick—time presses—call these Spanish beauties; for beauties I know they are, or you would not take such an interest in their fate. I would enter the gates at early dawn to be in time for the Sultan's *meshourah*."

Without further words, Hassan returned to the sister's tent, and shortly explained his plans, and the necessity for expedition. In a few moments they were ready. Selim brought up the mules; the sisters mounted, and taking the bridles, Hassan and the black led the beasts to the spot, amid the palms, where Abdallah, mounted upon one of the small but active and spirited donkeys of the country, was awaiting them.

"*Adios*, señorita," whispered the rais to Isabel; "go—go in peace, and may the blessing of Seidna Aisa, the Messiah, go with you. And you, señorita, have confidence in Abdallah; he was a friend of my boyhood; and since then I have served him. His manner is cold, and his words cautious; but his heart is warm, and his breast harbors no guile. Adios!"

Hassan's voice trembled; his heart was full of emotion. The image of his brother rose up before him; he started

with affright to find that image, occurring at the moment of parting with the Gaditana, gave him pain. Hassan, though still so young, had long schooled himself to master his emotions. Though trained in the rites of el Islam, and though bred a corsair, the Christian element of his character had never been wholly eradicated. Not that he was a Christian; but he ever felt a consciousness that he was not a Moor; that he had something in him which his companions had not —something that he could not reveal, and of which he did not rightly know the value himself. This consciousness had ever kept him spiritually aloof from those by whom he was surrounded. The better part of his nature had walked apart from the evil influences of his profession; and thus brooding in solitude, his soul, naturally pure and noble, had had an opportunity of expanding itself unhampered by the petty prejudices of sect or creed. The virtues of magnanimity and generosity had taken deep root, and flourished.

Hassan recovered himself in a moment; resolutely he entertained the image of his brother, his twin-brother, the son of his mother. He thought of him as the lover, and, for aught he knew, the favored lover of Isabel. Sternly he repressed the tide of feeling that was prompting him to some passionate demonstration. He would not even take her hand. He merely permitted himself to touch her garments, and press his own hand to his lips.

The young man hesitated for a moment, and then he drew a small package from his girdle, and put it into Isabel's hand. "I believe not much in the efficacy of talismans," he whispered, "but take this; it can do no harm. Adieu! May the God of all the prophets watch over you."

The package contained a written charm, in Arabic, consisting of a verse from the Koran; such as the Moors are in the habit of wearing on their persons, and hanging around the necks of their horses, to avert ill fortune; the Ten Commandments, in Hebrew, which the Jewish women of Barbary are in the custom of enclosing in little rolls of leather and tying upon their foreheads; and a silver crucifix with an image of the Saviour. The truly Catholic rover had charged his amulet upon the principle of putting in all kinds of shot for all kinds of game. Isabel secured the package in her bosom, though could she have suspected the unconscious sacrilege of the rais, in thus jumbling the symbols of Judaism. Mo-

hammedanism and Christianity, she would have cast it from her as though it had been a gift of the Evil One. Luckily, she knew nothing about it; and the peculiar religious state of mind of the rais troubled not her thoughts, as with his image filling her whole mind, she allowed her mule to quietly follow the guidance of Selim.

Pressing on more rapidly when the party had reached the open ground, Abdallah took a route that led around into the road dividing the negro-town, or the camp of Muley Ismael's black troops, from the city—thus coming upon the gates as if from the South. But it is unnecessary to follow their steps in detail, inasmuch as their détour and entrance into the city were effected without adventure of any kind.

Upon returning to camp, the rais threw himself upon the ground, but he could not sleep. The image of Isabel would intrude itself, notwithstanding that his whole soul revolted at any feeling inconsistent with what he supposed to be the prior rights of his new-found brother. The unfortunate circumstances of his life had left him, as we have said, but little religion of any kind; while high sentiments of honor and honesty may perhaps be supposed to be inconsistent with his profession. But it must be recollected that piracy in that day, among the Moors, especially when directed against the Spaniards, was considered a legitimate and honorable warfare, with national enemies, and that high and pure personal qualities in an individual are perfectly consistent with his adhesion to the general average morality of his age, his country, or his party. Were this principle better understood, and kept more steadily in view, political, social and religious disputes, of which this age of progress is so prolific, would be characterized by much more of charity for motives, and much less of personal abuse.

The disagreeable reveries of the young man were put an end to by a stir in the camp—it was the first flush of morn that aroused the recumbent sentinels, and in a few minutes guards and captives were afoot. With the rapidity peculiar to low latitudes, the purple haze of the dawn brightened into the full light of sunrise, disclosing a large body of the Sultan's black troops coming over the plain from the city.

The instant the imperial soldiers caught sight of the cavalcade of the rais, they changed their pace, and spurred into a quick gallop. Their numbers amounted to about five hun-

dred, and at their head rode the kaid of the slaves, Hammed ben Slowek. Upon their approach, the rais gave orders to his men to mount and form, and quietly he awaited the onset.

"In the name of Sidi our Lord, whom God preserve!" exclaimed the kaid, in a loud tone, "I take possession of all these slaves; and you," addressing the rais, "I shall arrest you as a traitor—we will see who it is who dared to raise his hand to a saint, and the minister of the shereef."

"If you have the command of the Sultan to take these, my captives, I will not resist," said Hassan, in a calm tone; "but for myself, I trust not my person in your hands. I shall present myself to the shereef—but I shall pick my own path, and choose my own company."

Turning to his men, he ordered them to close up, and follow him. "We are no longer needed here," he exclaimed, "and we may as well move on to the city."

Rage and hate distorted the ugly countenance of the kaid, as he watched the departing rais. He was about to make a demonstration of his feelings by attempting to arrest him, but prudence finally prevailed. The horsemen of the rais closed up their lines with too determined an air, at the word of their leader, to have rendered it a safe matter, even with his greatly superior force. Besides, the kaid had no special warrant for arresting the rover, and he knew that unless he could put him at once out of the way, so that his complaints could never reach the Sultan, the capricious tyrant might some day hold him strictly to account.

The kaid turned to examine the captives. He knew not of Juanita's return, and he was prepared, therefore, to find her gone—a glance convinced him that Isabel was also absent. He rode to the sisters' tent—it was empty. Dashing his spurs into his horse, he galloped after the rais. His whole frame shook, and his voice trembled with passion. "Hold! Spawn of a Christian! Son of a burnt grandfather!" he shouted. "Answer me. Where are the Kaffir women?"

"Dog!" replied Hassan, as he wheeled his horse alongside the kaid, and shook his clenched fist in his face; "dog—accursed liar and thief! How dare you ask that question! Think you I know not the robber who carried off my captive

at Kassar Farawan? Go! begone, or I shall be tempted to stain my sword with your base blood!"

The kaid galloped back to his troops, and dividing them into two bodies, the larger one to guard the prisoners, and the smaller one to accompany himself, he set out at full speed across the open plain, for the city.

"We must quicken our pace, men," said the rais, "'Tis the day for the Sultan's *meshourah*. He will administer justice in full court, and our heads will not be safe if we let this lying scoundrel precede us; so, forward, men—our horses are fresh, and honesty has wings, while guilt rides a laggard—we must be before him, for what says the sage, 'one lie in the Sultan's head will keep out twenty truths.'"

With a loud cheer, the long rowels and sharp corners of the stirrup irons were industriously scraped against the sides of the straining barbs, and both parties scoured the plain in nearly parallel courses, at a rate which soon brought them—the party of the rais, a little in advance—to the gates of the city.

CHAPTER XIV.

"THE proper study of mankind is man," is an oft-quoted saying of the poet. If we might aspire to the honor of procreating a similar adage, of equal profundity and of nearly equal originality and novelty, we should say that the most difficult study of mankind is woman. It is barely possible, however, that the novelty and originality of the observation may be disputed, but we defy any one to question its truth. In fact, for most men, the nature of woman is a sealed book, and must necessarily ever remain so. They love them and hate them, admire them and contemn them, flatter them and abuse them, do anything and everything, but understand them. They have not that femininity of sentiment superadded to their masculine qualities, the happy gift of a few lofty poetic souls, that can place them *en rapport* with the inner nature of women. They cannot make any allowance, or, at least, cannot do so instinctively and through the intuitions of sensibility, for the essential peculiarities of soul manifesting itself

through an organization which morally, mentally, and physically, is so entirely unlike their own. Even the boasted knowledge of the most experienced man of the world is but a knowledge of results. Give him the circumstances of situation and character, and he can guess pretty shrewdly what a woman will do, but he knows not how she does it, or what are the direct processes of female intellect and feeling. As in hunting the deer—the clever sportsman knows where the game will come out, and stations himsels for a shot; but knows not the precise path the animal will choose, or the number of turns and deviations he will make—still less the deeper sentiments, emotions, feelings—the inner life of the deer. 'Tis the poet, not the naturalist or the sportsman, who can gather the "big round tears as they course one another down his innocent nose in piteous chase."

But enough has been said to indicate the diffidence with which are ventured upon a division and classification of female character suggested by a glance at the three principal personages of our tale. First is the woman in whom the will is predominant over the other qualities of mind. Between this character and most men, there is a principle of repulsion which, despite the attraction of other qualities, tends to keep them apart. The interval may be small, but still it is an interval—and unless, as in some rare cases, the interval is passed, and the two become one, swallowed up in each other, as it were, like two coalescing globules of mercury, the dust of self settles in it, and the repulsion is increased. An unlucky endowment is this energy and force of character—this powerful volition—this superiority not only to her sex, but to the common herd of men. Rarely does the heart of such a woman find its mate or its master. But when it does so happen—when passion is aroused, reason and fancy taken captive, and the strong will mastered by a still stronger and more irresistible energy of character—then is developed a capacity for a love which poets have painted, but which few women know—for a love ardent and glowing, and animating as the Summer's sun, but subject to no revolutions, or changes, or spots that can dim its lustre.

The second class of women is of those in whom the affections are the strongest. They may have more or less of wit, will and intellect, but feeling and affection are supreme. And in proportion as the peculiar combination of moral qualities

characterizing the female predominates, does the representative of this class differ from the common type of man; and so in proportion does she melt into his soul, softening the harder and baser metal with her pure gold, into a valuable and harmonious alloy.

The third class is of those in which the imagination is the mistress. Everything is modified and controlled by the poetic faculty. Nothing can be more charming than the brilliant tinge that this quality throws over the whole character; but it requires an even balance of the other faculties to sustain the glare. With strong salient points and corresponding depressions, the effect is bad, even in men, much more so in women, especially in their relations to men. Like sunrise on Alps or Andes, the brighter the high peaks glow, the deeper are the shadows in the valleys. In love a predominant imagination has its advantages and its disadvantages. A woman of this class requires heroes—unluckily there are no heroes—but fortunately she is capable of making them for herself. The difficulty is, however, that when made they will not last, unless as in the case of our Moorish maiden Xaripha, whom we left commencing the exercise of her art upon Edward Carlyle, the original material is of sufficient quality and strength.

But to escape from this presumptuous, and, if the reader will believe it, wholly involuntary adventuring upon a subject which admits of as many views as there can be found observers, let us return, for a moment, while the rais and kaid are waiting in the great court of the palace for the appearance of the Sultan, to the house of Abdallah, where, it will be recollected, we left Xaripha singing a Moorish ballad to Edward Carlyle.

But five short weeks had elapsed, and yet the Moorish maiden and the young Englishman had lived ages of ordinary life; that is, if the progress of time is estimated, as well it may be, by the development of sentiment, and the expansion of the heart. To them, however, the actual time seemed short, and the five weeks were but as five days.

The love of Edward for Xaripha was fierce, passionate and sensuous. His senses were ravished, carried away, maddened by the sentiment of physical and sexual beauty. Not that he was insensible to her graces of mind, or to her moral charms; but his whole soul glowed and trembled in the magnetic light

that seemed to him to stream from every point of her rounded form, from every flash of her lustrous eye, from every dimple and curve of her features. His was the love of the old Greek, who lived in friendly, not scientific or sentimental relations with the material world; who adored nature instead of analyzing her; who deified the elemental forces, and who gloried in the animal while conceding a wide domain to the spiritual, and a still wider domain to the intellectual.

And Xaripha returned this love with an almost equally passionate eagerness; but in her it was modified in its manifestations by natural modesty and the influence of the imagination. The form and figure of the young man were sufficient for her sense of manly beauty; but not content with that, she at once invested him, mentally and morally, with all the attributes of the heroic. While he groveled, the veriest slave of her charms, at her feet, she lifted him so high, that she could barely perceive the chains by which he was bound. When a woman elevates her lover thus high, it needs but the slightest spark of suspicion to kindle a flame of jealousy large enough to fill up the interval between his exaltation and her own self-abasement.

The progress of the affair was silently watched by Abdallah, he offered no objection to the lovers being continually together. His desire to leave the country and take up his residence in some Christian land, had gathered additional force since his appointment to the office of kaid of the gates, and he knew that in case they could compass their escape, a young and efficient protector for his beloved daughter would be the thing the most to be desired. The duties of the kaid required his presence the greater part of the day at the palace, thus leaving the lovers pretty much to themselves, or at most disturbed only by the passing to and fro, in their household avocations, of two or three female slaves, who, under the orders of Fatima Laboo, composed the kaid's household. The caution of the father, however, was not asleep. Although none of the prejudices of his countrymen, in relation to the intercourse of the sexes, clung to him, yet, as a man of the world, he thought it most prudent to keep a watchful eye upon the impassioned lovers, and Fatima was charged with their supervision during his absences.

"You must take great care, Fatima," said the kaid, "that

none of the women chatter to our neighbor's slaves about the presence of this young man here—if they do, I am ruined."

"Yah! sidi; if I catch 'em, I'll cut their tongues out," replied Fatima; "they know me; they won't do it. Don't be afraid, sidi; nobody comes in or goes out that door but you and me."

"No, but they will talk over the battlements."

"Yah! yah! I like to see them do it. I tell 'em I make grand Obi. Yah! yah! they too 'fraid to talk."

"Well, Fatima, I leave it all to you," said Abdallah, in a confidential tone; "but there is one thing more; you love Xaripha?"

"Yah! tear my heart right out, you see Leila 'Ripha just in the middle of it."

"I doubt it not; and, because you love her, I wish you to keep your eye on her and this young man. Don't appear to watch them; but don't leave them too long out of your sight. Do you understand?"

"Yah! yah!" exclaimed Fatima; "I understand; no use to tell me; I watch 'em all the time; I stand right behind him when he take Lelia Xaripha's hand, and I thought he was going to bite it. If he had, yah! I had the big cleaver in my hand, and I'd chopped his head right off."

"Well, you need not go so far as that. If there are any heads to be chopped off, leave that to me; but keep watch of them."

"Yah! yah! I see 'em," exclaimed Fatima, as she securcd the street door after her master; "and I hear 'em, too—yah! how Leila Xaripha make him talk, and he a dumb man—yah! yah!"

Unluckily, the assurances of Fatima, as to her power of enforcing secresy in relation to the presence of the young man, were badly borne out by facts. Suspicion had been excited, and on the day when Selim arrived with his message from the rais, the kaid had been informed of the rumor that some mysterious person was concealed in his house. He knew that his enemies, or those who were envious of his official elevation, and of his influence with the Sultan, would try to turn the rumor to his injury, and his fears were excited for the safety of one whom he had promised to protect, and whom he had come to regard.

"It will not do," he thought, "for him to remain any

longer where he is; now that suspicion is excited, there is no knowing what turn the affair may take."

The worthy kaid was for some time in great perplexity as to the best course to pursue. At first he thought of dispatching Edward into the country, but to this there were many objectione; an insuperable one being the fact that the young Englishman had not learned a word of the language. Xaripha speaking both Spanish and Italian fluently, and either of those languages being fully competent for the purposes of love-making, the necessity for the more guttural and copious Arabic had not been felt. At last he decided upon trying to secrete him in the *millah*, among the Jews. Once within the walls of the millah, or Jewish quarter, which, in Mequinez, is situated in the centre of the city, and secreted in the house of some Rabbin, or person of distinction, he would probably be safe, as no Moors are allowed to penetrate the enclosure, except upon the special order of the higher authorities of the court. But upon the appearance of Selim, the kaid concluded to defer saying anything about his plans until the rais had arrived, and thus for a few hours longer the lovers were left in happy ignorance of their approaching separation.

It was at an early hour that the kaid, with his companions, reached the walls of the city. The gates were closed, but upon Abdallah's requisition, as chief kaid of the gates, they were flung open at once.

There was light enough to show a group of Christian slaves, who were taking their scanty meal of black barley bread, at an angle of the narrow streets, preparatory to commencing work upon one of the numerous buildings which Muley Ismael was for ever erecting and pulling down. Their guards had either wandered away, or were quietly rolled up in their haicks, on some dry spot of ground, asleep, leaving their miserable charges to talk, laugh, curse, and squabble in all languages over their coarse and scanty meal.

The sisters heard, close by their side, a familiar voice uttering some ribaldry in Spanish, and turning, their eyes fell upon the tall, gaunt figure of Don Diego de Orsolo. Isabel started with pleasure; for a moment she forgot all the persecutions to which she had been subjected; all her detestation of the don; she thought of him only as a kinsman and a countryman, and her heart leaped at once to her mouth.

"Orsolo, cousin Orsolo," she cried, reining up her mule.

"*Madre de dios!* what voice is that! who are you?" and the don advanced to her side.

"Come on, señorita," whispered Abdallah, "'tis sure destruction to parley with these slaves."

"One moment!" exclaimed Isabel, "'tis my cousin;" and bending in her saddle, she spoke in a low tone to the wondering don. Several questions and replies were rapidly interchanged between them—sufficient to apprise him of the principal features of their capture and situation—when, yielding to another stern admonition from Abdallah, and an impatient gesture from Selim, she bade him adieu.

"What madness, sister!" exclaimed Juanita, leaning back in her saddle—the narrow street not permitting two to ride abreast.

"But he is our cousin."

"True, and he tried to force you to be his wife—his cousinship makes him none the less vile, and renders it none the less dangerous to intrust him with our secret. Heaven grant that no evil come of your readiness to acknowledge an infamous traitor.

The young girl spoke in a tone of reproof that betokened her rapidly developing superiority, in force of character, over the older, but more simple and purely feminine nature of her sister. Isabel felt a conviction of her imprudence, and made no reply.

The streets were beginning to be alive with people, but, without attracting attention, the travelers passed on until they stood before the door of Abdallah's dwelling. Here they paused for a moment, until the kaid went in and returned with a key, with which he opened the door leading to an adjoining house.

The narrow street was raised in front of the door by the accumulated filth of years, so that it was necessary to step down into the doorway; but once inside, the small open court seemed cheerful, and the rooms, though destitute of furniture, as clean and comfortable as Spanish ladies could desire.

CHAPTER XV.

THE sun was about three hours above the horizon when the great court and garden in the centre of the harem began to fill with the attendants, officers, and suitors at the Sultan's *meshourah*, or general audience of justice, which it was the custom of the indefatigable Muley Ismael to hold twice a week. There were detachments of black troops encircling the vast enclosure: there were groups of Moors of every degree, Christian slaves, renegadoes, and Jews, gangs of executioners, and a large band of impish-looking boys, who were kept by the Sultan in training for guards and ministers of his capricious will. There were kaids and governors of Fez, Tetuan, and Rabat, and bashaws from Tafilet, Tlemcen and Soos; and, waiting in an outer court for the Sultan's appearance, were an English Ambassador and suite, under charge of one of the Sultan's sons and an Irish renegado named Kerr, who, for several years, lived in high favor at the Maroquien court.

The high latticed gallery, that we have noticed as running upon arches across the garden, was filled with several hundred women of all ages, colors and nations, but mostly native born, or black from Soudan.

The clash and clang of a hundred Moorish instruments broke upon the hushed air, and a wide pair of arched folding-doors being thrown open, the Sultan appeared. To the eyes of the persons composing the English embassy the first presentiment of the Sultan was exceedingly grotesque. He was seated in an old-fashioned and somewhat dilapidated English gig, gaudily painted, which was moved by two stalwart negroes supporting the shafts, and as many more pushing behind. This gig had been, most probably, a portion of the numerous, and frequently very costly presents. that even down to the present day it has been the custom of European governments to make to the Maroquien court. The folding top was thrown back; but, on either side, and a little in the rear, ran two negroes, supporting, by means of long poles, a

parasol or canopy of red silk. With his feet drawn up under him upon the wide seat, sat the energetic old despot, while, in front of him, and holding on by the dash-board, stood a little boy scarcely three years of age. This boy was the youngest son of the Sultan, the child of his old age. A wide interval of ten years separated him from any of his brothers, of whom the number was several hundred, and the whole affection of his father was centred in him.

The elder sons of Muley Ismael had given him a good deal of trouble. They were frequently in rebellion against him; driven into it by his jealousy and the intrigues of Laila Ajakah, the favorite queen, who had acquired an ascendancy over the mind of the suspicious despot, and who was resolved to secure the throne for her own son, by goading the Sultan on to the destruction of the elder children of his other wives. By this means his feelings had become, in the highest degree, exasperated. He hated and dreaded his children, and on several occasions punished their supposed offences with the most rigorous cruelty.

In the minds of the Mequinezians, the memory was still fresh of the horror that pervaded all hearts as the Sultan marched through the gates of the city to meet his son Mohammed, who had been appointed governor of Tarudant, and who having reason to fear that his life was in danger, had resisted all efforts to bring him to court, but who had finally been captured by a superior force, and was coming, a prisoner, in chains. A large gang of slaves accompanied the imperial cortége, bearing kettles of tar and faggots of wood. Mohammed threw himself at his father's feet, and besought his mercy, but the inexorable despot ordered both feet to be stricken off, and the bleeding stumps to be dipped into a kettle of melted tar. Mohammed, who had qualities of person and mind that rendered him a great favorite with the people, indignantly refused life upon such terms, and tearing the bandages from his wounds, in a few hours expired.

But jealousy of his elder children served to turn with additional force the whole current of paternal affection upon his youngest. The old man had nothing to fear from him, he could therefore afford to love him—he did more, he doated upon him with his whole soul.

As the lumbering gig, with its royal occupant, wheeled

into the garden, a shout went up from a thousand voices that drowned the rude clangor of the band.

"God preserve Sidi! Long life to our lord!" shouted the multitude, bowing down and kissing the earth, and striking their heads upon the ground. Several of the principal courtiers ran, creeping, up to the gig, and touching the shafts or wheels, carried their hands to their lips; a few, more bold, thrust their hands in and touched the Emperor's garments.

The first business was the reception of the English ambassador. The ceremony occupied but a few minutes. The ambassador, at the head of his suite, presented himself in front of the gig, and making a short and dignified speech, in which he stated the object of his coming—the freedom of English slaves who had been captured in contravention of existing treaties and the furtherance of commercial communications—ended by offering a letter of compliment from his master, William III. The letter was enveloped in a roll of silk, and, at a sign from the Sultan, was received by one of the eunuchs of the harem.

The Sultan, who was habited, as we have before seen him, in a plain white haick and an immense turban, replied in a very bland tone that "the English were a great and a good people; that he had always liked the English better than any other people, and that he had always favored them. That he wished them to come and make trade in his ports; and that everything that the King of England wished, in relation to slaves or to commerce, should be attended to at once by his ministers."

Slaves bearing a portion of the presents, consisting of broadcloths, cutlery, porcelain, glassware, candles, and other articles of English manufacture, advanced with their burdens, and with a careless glance from the Sultan, were ordered off to one of the numerous kobabs, or storehouses, contained in the palace. The Sultan gave orders that a horse should be presented to the ambassador, and that the Christians should be allowed to visit the principal courts and apartments of the palace. The happy envoy, with his suite, bowed his adieu, and retired, congratulating himself upon the probabilities of a successful termination to his mission, and little dreaming of the delays, the extortions, the falsehoods, the miserable intrigues that would try his patience for weeks and months, and perhaps defeat the consummation of the Sultan's promises entirely.

Several bashaws, from the distant provinces of Tafiles and Soos, now presented themselves in succession, and after a few questions from the Sultan, were referred to the Prime Minister, Iben Soului, a withered old man who sat upon the ground, a little apart—pen and inkhorn in hand, and with the archives of his office rolled in a silk handkerchief by his side.

Upon a sign from the Sultan, two Jews advanced, crouching and creeping along the ground in the most humble and deprecating attitude. They were the wealthiest and most influential of their tribe in Morocco, but for a long time they had been deadly enemies, and at last one of them, named Ben Hattar, had carried his animosity so far as to offer to purchase his enemy from the Sultan for a large sum. It was no uncommon thing in Morocco, in the days of our story, for the Sultan, instead of "squeezing" a man suspected of wealth, himself, to sell him out to some enterprising speculator, who thus acquired the right of tormenting his captive until he disclosed his hoards. "The bought man" was beaten, burned with hot irons, and hung up by the feet, until he disgorged enough to pay the price that his buyer had given, and a fair profit on the investment. The reader will be disposed to admit that if the spirit of speculation has, in the present day, attained a greater degree of refinement in its modes of operations, it does not surpass the old Maroquien methods in directness and boldness.

In the case of Ben Hattar, the Sultan at once accepted the offer, and the money was paid. But, sending for Benshemole, he informed him of the bargain that had been made.

"I will give twice the sum for him," cried Benshemole.

"Send it to the treasurer, and appear at the meshourah to-morrow," replied the Sultan; and in obedience to this order the two rivals and enemies were now before him.

The eyes of Muley Ismael twinkled with an expression of malicious fun, and for a few minutes he looked at the crouching Jews without speaking.

Breaking silence, he, in a very good-humored tone, reproached them for their mutual folly; thanked them ironically for letting him know how much each thought the other worth; told them that he should keep the sums they had offered, but that he could not think of committing the injustice of allowing Ben Hattar to be rated at a less value than

Benshemole, and that the former must at once double the sum he had already paid.

"And now, most worthy children of the holy Prophet Abraham," continued the Sultan, "embrace each other, and be friends!'

Struck with the exceeding folly of their enmity, the rivals obeyed the order and embraced, thus commencing a friendship which was soon cemented by the marriage of Benshemole to the daughter of Ben Hattar. The Sultan threw himself back in his gig, and fairly grinned with delight, upon which a low murmur of applause ran round the court.

A burly, truculent-looking Moor taking advantage of the Sultan's good humor, stepped out from the crowd, and placing his hand upon his heart, advanced towards the gig. "God preserve our lord!" he exclaimed. "Long life to the just sidi! Health to the merciful sidi! Happiness to the wise sidi! Who can speak of the justice of our lord? It fills the heart, but it seals the lips. The justice of Allah is the justice of sidi!"

A scowl settled upon the face of the Sultan; and leaning forward, he addressed the presumptuous sycophant in a subdued tone, that to the old courtiers forboded a spring of the tiger.

"And how know you aught of the justice of the Sultan?" he demanded.

"Is it not famed," replied the Moor, "from Tangier to Timbuctoo? Is not the world filled with it? Is not crime extirpated from the country? And is not robbery unknown? Could not a woman ride from one end of the land to the other, with a purse of gold in her lap, and no one dare to molest her? 'Twas but three days since that I was coming from Tituan; a bag of walnuts lay by the roadside, but no traveler dared disturb it."

"How did you know that it was a bag of walnuts?" interposed the Sultan.

"I dismounted from my horse, and touched it with my foot," replied the Moor.

"Which foot?" demanded the Sultan, in a tone that sent a shudder through the crowd, and made even the rash and presumptuous flatterer tremble.

The Moor saw, when too late, that he had ventured within the tiger's clutch. His voice faltered, and in silence he pointed to his left foot.

"Strike off the foot that has dared to touch a bag of walnuts left without an owner by a road-side in my empire!" roared the Sultan; and hardly had the command left his mouth, when the Moor was seized by the executioners, his leg thrown over a block of wood, and stricken off with a single blow. A plaster of hot pitch stopped the hemorrhage; and with a feeling of resignation to the orderings of Providence, common to the Moors, but which the most devout Christian seldom attains, the unlucky courtier left the garden, to be in a few days called again to court, received into favor, and sent as bashaw, in all honor, to a distant province.*

At this moment some commotion was excited at the great gate of the garden; and the next instant, the rover, Hassan Herach, and Hammed ben Slowek, kaid of the slaves, rushed in, forcing their way through the crowd into the clear space in front of the Sultan. Etiquette required them to pause at a considerable distance, and await the bidding of the Emperor; but in their hurry and excitement they pressed up considerably within the prescribed limits. The gloomy scowl that hung upon the visage of Muley Ismael grew still deeper as he scanned for a moment the two figures before him.

At length he signed for the kaid to advance. The rais took a step forward also; but the royal scowl grew darker, and he saw that it would be death to persist. Inwardly chafing with rage and vexation, Hassan was compelled to draw himself up calmly, and, folding his hands upon his breast, await an opportunity to speak.

Destiny, however, seemed to threaten that no opportunity should be afforded him; for as Hammed told his story the brow of the Sultan grew more corrugated, and his lips more compressed. The kaid spoke in a low tone, and with a rapidity and energy that showed him resolved to improve to the utmost the advantage of being first in the field. A feeling of lofty and indignant scorn swelled the young man's heart almost to bursting, as he watched the impression which the story of the wily kaid was making upon the mind of the monarch. He could not hear what his antagonist was saying; but he marked its effect, and for an instant he was about to dart forward, denounce the kaid as a liar, and fell him to the earth.

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* It is perhaps necessary to repeat the assurance, that in relation to the incidents in which Muley Ismael is concerned, no invention on the part of the author has been called for, or indulged in.

"But prudence," he muttered to himself, "for her sake!" And clenching his teeth, he restrained the impulse.

But darker grew the royal scowl, until, raising his hand for the kaid to cease, the Sultan pointed to the young rais, and exclaimed, "Bind him! beat the life out of him! A thousand blows of the bastinado!"

Hassan hesitated no longer. As the negro executioners advanced upon him, he darted to the side of the gig, exclaiming in a loud voice, "Justice, sidi! In the name of Allah, justice! I demand a hearing!"

The Sultan remained immovable; and the negroes rushing upon Hassan, began to drag him away, when suddenly exerting the whole force of his powerful frame, he tore himself from their grasp and sprang back to the Sultan.

"Justice, sidi!" he cried; "if not in the name of Allah, in the name of this child." And the rais seized hold of the garments of the young prince, who was leaning over the front of the gig.

The guards paused—the child turned, feeling the pull on his clothes, when seeing Hassan's hand extended toward the Sultan, with a shout of pleasure he sprang into his arms. Hassan pressed the boy to his breast, and kissed him repeatedly on his brow and cheeks.

The father half raised himself from his seat, and uttered a slight cry of terror—the next moment he calmly resumed his position, and signed to the executioners to retire.

"Put the child back," he exclaimed; "were you the greatest traitor, he has saved your life."

Hassan obeyed the order, but the boy clung to his hand, and would not let him withdraw it.

"Speak!" said the Sultan; "what have you to say to the charges of our servant, the kaid? Who are you?"

"I am Hassan Herach?"

"What! he whom men call the rais el rais—the captain of the captains—the broom of the seas?" exclaimed the Sultan.

"The same; and well may I boast of the number of your enemies that I have swept from the ocean."

"Ha!" cried the Sultan, turning with a scowling brow to the kaid on the other side of the gig, "I knew not this—but go on—we were too hasty—we will hear your whole story."

It may be supposed that Hassan did not fail to improve the permission. Rapidly and clearly he enumerated his great services — described his recent capture — explained the grounds of his quarrel with the kaid, and apologized for any apparent disrespect to the letter of the imperial order. The Sultan listened with attention, and when the kaid interposed some objection, sternly ordered him to withdraw from the court. The crestfallen kaid was too wise to risk another command, and with it an explosion of imperial wrath, and gladly slunk away to await a more propitious moment for his intrigues.

"Your services have been great, my son," said the Sultan, "and for your offence in refusing to deliver your captives, except into our own hands, we pardon you. But you raised your hand against a saint, and for that you must be punished. I shall fine you a hundred metcals—but, inasmuch as the kaid, though a saint, is a great liar, you need not pay him—you may send the money to my treasurer."

"Permit me," said the rais, "to make my savior here a treasurer for this purpose;" and drawing a purse from his girdle, containing four or five times the amount of the fine, he placed it in the lap of the young prince.

The Sultan extended his hand, and as the rais was about to kiss the back of it, Muley Ismael turned it so that his lips might touch the palm—a mark of the greatest condescension and favor.

The Sultan waved his hand—the gig was put in motion—the band struck up—a few muskets were fired by the guards—shouts of "Long life to Sidi!" rent the air—and the crowd began to pour out of the great gates into the exterior courts. The meshourah was at an end.

As the Emperor disappeared through the arches of an inner court, he took off his haick and sent it by an officer of distinction to the rais. The present was esteemed by the crowd as a most striking mark of favor, and congratulations were showered upon the young man from all sides. Hassan, however, was not to be deceived; he knew what the favor of Muley Ismael was worth, especially with an enemy like the kaid working against him, and he felt more elated at the temporary defeat of the designs of his enemy, in relation to the sisters, than at any probability of future influence at court.

The courtiers, too, who congratulated him, knew what the favor of the jealous and capricious tyrant was worth, and by what a precarious tenure office, property, and even life itself, were held by his favorites; but there were not wanting some among them who were almost bursting with envy when they saw the empty honor of the imperial haick offered to the rais. Verily, it is not alone in Christian countries that the love of place, power and position—the groveling ambition of unearned and undeserved political and social distinction—the spirit of lying, flattering, sycophantic flunkeyism, is stronger than self-respect, pride of character, honesty, charity, or even the fear of death. It is almost as bad among the Moors.

CHAPTER XVI.

"PRAISE be to Allah!" exclaimed Abdallah, drawing the rais into his private room in one of the kobahs.

"That was a lucky thought of yours, that of the child—and bravely was it done; a moment's faltering would have cost you your life! But what now?—you have unhorsed the kaid for a time, but he is not dead yet—and recollect you not the words of the poet: 'the favor of princes is like the thistle down—'tis blown about by the winds, and where it lighteth it produceth thorns?'"

"True, O most excellent friend!" exclaimed the rais, "but I mean to await not the change of the wind, or the germanating of the weed. 'The wild horse of occasion must be seized by the mane,' says the poet, 'and ridden without bit or bridle. He who waits to tighten the saddle-girths of opportunity loses the race.'"

"But what are your plans?" demanded Abdallah.

"To dispatch the two Spaniards and my brother as soon as possible to the Kassar of the Berber Amekran, Casbin Subah, where they can await in safety the turn of events."

"'Twill be impossible to do that for several days," replied Abdallah; "you must communicate with the Berber chief, and we must devise some plan for getting the Gaditanas out of the city without being observed. No one, I think, knows

where they are at present; if you should undertake to start with them at once, you would most assuredly inform the whole city."

The rais mused for a moment—"What is your advice?" he demanded.

"My advice is," replied Abdallah, "that you hire some vacant house and move into it, and there keep your brother closely concealed. It is essential that he leave my house, for already there is much talk among the neighbors. As to the Spanish maidens, you can leave them for a few days in perfect safety, where they are. I will see that they are supplied with food, and that no one intrudes on their privacy. To avoid suspicion, you must not be seen entering their house too often."

Acting upon this advice, the rais, with his faithful Selim, followed by the sailors of the galley, made his way through the crowd that thronged around to catch a sight of the famous rover. As soon as it was known that he wanted a house, a hundred were offered to him, and from among them he selected the smallest—a little building twenty feet square, and one story in height—because it afforded him an excuse for sending his men to lodge at a *fondac*, or inn, and because it was situated but three or four squares from the house that contained his captives.

A Moorish house of the common class requires but little time or expense in fitting up and furnishing. A thick rug or carpet; a few leather cushions stuffed with wool; a table standing about a foot high from the floor; a portable furnace for charcoal; a few cooking utensils, and in half-an-hour the house was complete.

The rest of the day the rais occupied himself in looking after the comfort, and alleviating, as far as possible, the misery of his male captives, who arrived, fatigued and hungry, in charge of the lieutenant kaid of the slaves. The Moors were for putting them at once to work upon the palace walls, but the rais insisted that they should have at least one day to recruit their strength.

At night Edward left the house of Abdallah, and, drawing his haick closely around his face, followed Selim to the house of the rais. The brothers met again, with many expressions of true, heartfelt delight. But notwithstanding the strong fraternal affection that had rapidly developed itself, and the

many subjects of interest between them, the change from the spacious courts and lofty rooms of the house of the kaid to the dark and straitened apartments of his new residence struck Edward as extremely unpleasant. Perhaps had Xaripha accompanied him, the difference would not have been so perceptible, or, it may be, would have entirely disappeared—such power has the electro-magnetism of love to overlay with leaves of fine gold the commonest and meanest things of life.

And Xaripha—she, too, felt as if the light of the sun had grown dim, as if nature had become suddenly overcast; the shadow that enveloped her soul was projected upon all creation, and she no longer paced the terrace with an elastic step, her imagination glowing with the traditionary recollections of Andalusia. She no longer strained her eyes in the direction of the hills of Grenada. Her embroidery was thrown aside; her guitar was neglected, and her sole occupation was to sit and sigh and count the moments to the time when she might hope for a promised visit from her lover. Let not the maidens of Christian lands, who have a thousand resources in books, in dress, and in society, think contemptuously of the lovely, loving, and lonely Maroquien.

Every motion of Xaripha was watched by her nurse, Fatima Laboo, with the most intense interest. The greater part of the day the old negress rolled about on the terrace, with nothing but a scanty garment of cotton to protect her from the hot sun, and peered through the balustrade down into the gallery where Xaripha sat, occasionally giving vent, in low mutterings, to her indignation at the supposed cause of Xaripha's change of spirits.

"Yah, I wish he come again. I make him fetish for him. I give him dish kill ten devils. Yah, I think he make little 'Ripha feel bad. If he don't, what he gone away for? She won't say a word—perhaps her father make her feel bad. Yah! I wish I know. By Prophet Mohammed, I make him Obi dish, too. Yah! yah!"

One subject of interest, beside her lover, occupied a portion of Xaripha's thoughts. She knew that the Spanish sisters were secreted in the adjoining dwelling, and pity for their hard fate, mingled with curiosity to see the object of Edward's former gallantry, urged her to visit them. The proposition, however, was met by a decided prohibition from her father.

"It will endanger our lives," he replied. "Recollect that our every movement is jealously watched. Let attention be at once attracted to the house, and all will be discovered. The rais and I have laid our plans to get off to the kassar of his friend, the chief of the Mozarg, from whence we can pass along the range of hills to the coast at Tituan, and thence across the straits to Spain. But if anything goes wrong, our lives will not be worth a cripple's ransom.

Prohibited from visiting the sisters, Xaripha's curiosity increased until it exercised her mind almost as much as did the recollection of Edward. Her active imagination invested them with every hue of beauty, and she could not refrain from mounting the terrace, and trying to catch a glimpse over the high battlements, into the adjoining house.

Xaripha's movements were closely watched by Fatima Laboo, who, with her muttered exclamations and objurgations, was forever waddling about the gallery and terraces in the effort to keep Xaripha's face in sight.

At one angle of the house was situated a small turret or tower, covering the narrow staircase that opened upon the flat roof. It was this tower that obstructed the view of the court of the adjoining house. Xaripha looked up at it with a wistful eye. She could almost touch the serrated eaves—a ladder of half a dozen rounds would have enabled her to reach the top! Again and again did the young girl mount to the terrace, and examine with curious eyes the envious turret that prevented her from opening a communication with the sisters, while closely her motions were watched by Fatima, who, satisfied that something was wrong, puzzled herself in vain conjectures as to the cause of her mistress' taciturnity and restlessness.

It was the third day after the departure of Edward that, in mounting the staircase, Xaripha's attention was directed to two or three small slits, like loop-holes for musketry, high up in the wall of the turret, and corresponding to similar ones made over the door opening on the terrace. In an instant it flashed upon the young girl that she could at last reach those openings, and that they must command nearly as good a view of the court below as could be had from the top of the tower. She could not resist the impulse, and, flying downstairs, returned with a light reed work-table, which she placed beneath the loop-holes. Two or three leather cushions were

added, and Xaripha sprang upon them, and placed her eye to the opening.

The narrow patio of the adjoining house lay directly beneath her—Xaripha glanced down into it. She started—her cheek grew deadly pale—she tottered and almost fell from her position, but recovering herself, she again looked through the opening, and as she looked the color came to her brow and cheek—redder, deeper, fiercer it burned—while her large black eyes glowed like those of a maddened tigress. Again the blood forsook her face—a shudder ran through her frame, and springing to the floor, with a moan of anguish, she clutched her floating hair, and pressed her hands to her eyes, as if to shut out some dreadful vision.

The old negress, who had been watching her through the open door from an angle of the terrace, rushed in with a torrent of exclamations and inquiries, but Xaripha heeded her not. Her only reply was a few hysterical sobs and moans, and then pushing the old woman fiercely aside, the maiden flew down the stairs, and rushing across the gallery, threw herself, with a passionate groan upon her couch.

Fatima recovered her balance with difficulty, and, for a few moments, stood stupidly see-sawing and shaking her head and uttering her usual exclamations of yah, yah! yah, yah! At length her ideas seemed to return to her.

"I'll see what it is makes little 'Ripha so bad here," muttered the old woman, as she put her finger to her head, and turned to the table and cushions upon which Xaripha had stood. "But suppose 'tis a djin lives in that hole? I don't care, he can't hurt me. I got marabout charm and Bambarra fetish. You come out of that hole, mister djin, I know;" and deliberately climbing upon the table, which bent beneath her weight, she drew herself up to the loop-hole.

The sight that met Fatima's eyes startled her at first almost as much as it had Xaripha. In an instant she felt that she had obtained the key to everything in Xaripha's conduct that had puzzled her. Of all the components, primary and secondary, that ever enter into the composition of the passion of love, the sentiment of jealously is the most easily comprehended, especially by the unrefined and unintellectual; and to the old woman's mind the whole mystery was solved.

In the court, beneath the eye of the old negress, stood Isabel de Estivan; and, with his arm thrown tenderly around

her waist, was a young man dressed in Moorish garb, whose face, figure, attitude and action were precisely those of Edward Carlyle. One hand of the maiden hung upon the shoulder of the young man, the other rested in his grasp, and was frequently pressed to his lips.

Their conference was ended, and drawing the half-shrinking, half-yielding figure of the Spanish girl toward him, he pressed her for a moment to his breast, kissed her cheeks, and then retiring with deliberate gravity, disappeared through the *skeffa*, or entrance-room, into the street.

The rage of Fatima had never before been so excited; she ground her teeth—sputtered a string of unintelligible exclamations in the negro dialect of Soudan—clenched her hands—gesticulated furiously—and stamping her feet, the frail support gave way, and let her down, heels over head, to the floor. Of the narrow room, half the space was occupied by the area of the staircase, and, unluckily, as she rolled over, her head and shoulders were directed into the yawning descent, down which she slid noisily, thumping from stair to stair, and shrieking at the top of her lungs, until she landed on the floor below.

The noise aroused Xaripha from her stupor, and, springing from the couch, she flew to her assistance. But it was Fatima's turn to sulk now, and rising, she rubbed herself to ascertain that her bones were sound; when, refusing all assistance, she waddled off, muttering threats of vengeance.

Xaripha stood in the gallery, and leaning upon the railing with a vacant and pre-occupied look, watched the old woman as she busied herself—now in sharpening a large knife—now in plaiting a rope of palmetto fibres—and now in cooking, with sundry prayers and incantations, some kind of magic dish over a furnace of glowing charcoal.

And thus will we leave the two, while we look in at the next door, and see what was passing at the same moment with the sisters.

CHAPTER XVII.

"AND now that I know from my brother's own lips that he loves another, I have a right, señorita, to tell you of thoughts and feelings that I have hitherto kept shut up in my own breast."

The rover passed his arm around the waist of the unresisting Gaditana.

"You know not, dearest Isabel!" continued the young man in a low and quiet voice, but in that peculiar tone that ever indicates strong passion and feeling, subdued and chained by energetic will—"You know not the desperate need of my heart; you know not the yearning of my soul for a higher spiritual and sentimental intercommunion than my destiny has hitherto allowed me to hope for; you know not my isolation from all around me—my disgust for the social and domestic life of this country; my untutored cravings for something better. You know not the longings my nature has felt, not so much to be loved—for that, perhaps, could have been partially gratified by the passionate devotion of the women of this country—but to love. You will let me love you, Isabel?

"I am no Moor, señorita, except in dress and every-day habits of life and language—and truth to say, in religious matters I am not much of a Christian, but I feel as teachable as a child. We will leave this land, dearest, and you shall instruct me—you shall guide my steps to the footstool of the true Prophet of God. You would save a soul from perdition—you would save mine, Isabel?"

"To save yours," exclaimed Isabel, "I would endanger my own!"

"And not my soul only, but my heart, too—you will not allow it to wither and decay? Hast ever heard, señorita, that the vine will live and grow, but without fruit, in the desert, until water is brought near it, when at once it makes the most desperate efforts to reach the fountain, and, if it fails, it suddenly withers and dies? You are the fountain that has burst forth in my desert; no more for me the arid sands—my heart

must drink the sparkling waters, or it will sicken and die. I must love you—you must love me—forever!"

"Yes, forever!" murmured Isabel, as Hassan folded her to his heart.

"But time flies, señorita. See! the sun no longer gilds the minaret, and hark! the mueddin calls to prayers. Your sister is pacing the terrace, impatient for my departure, and I have much to do. I dare not see you often—but sleep without fear. The holy mother of your prophet, Seedna Aisa, will guard you from all evil spirits, while, with the blessing of God, I will take every precaution to secure you from evil men."

"And, señorita," continued the rais, as he released the blushing girl from a last embrace—"be ready with your sister to depart at any instant. At present all is safe. The kaid, Hammed ben Slowek knows not where you are, and the Sultan is so pleased with the acquisition of several Christian artisans and skilful workmen, that he thinks not of inquiring after my female captives. But thanks to the kaid's malice, and the Sultan's jealous caprice, this calm cannot last long, and you must hold yourself in readiness to depart at a moment's warning. Adieu!"

"Adieu!" murmured Isabel; and, holding out her hand, she was about to speak—but, changing her mind, she hesitated—deep feeling finds but few words—and then, in pure want of something better to say, or rather, in want of a fitting expression for something better and stronger, she exclaimed: "Go! but do not forget me."

"Forget you! light of my soul!" replied Hassan, springing back and seizing her hand; "impossible! You are my sun! Like him you may sink out of sight for a while, but my heart is elevated so high on the mountain peaks of hope, that 'twill bathe all night in the twilight. I shall count the sands to your rising—they will run slowly—but I shall not complain, since they are dampened with the dew of your kindness. Adieu!"

The rais cautiously opened the door, and passed into the street. Isabel secured the door by its wooden bolts, and stepped back into the court, where she was joined by her sister, who came flying down the narrow staircase leading to the terrace, as if she had wings.

"Oh, sister! I have seen him! I have seen him!" exclaimed Juanita.

"Who? Where?" demanded Isabel.

"Up there—over the terrace of a distant house"—and the young girl's eyes flashed with delight. "He saw me—he waved his hand to me, and then disappeared. I suppose he does not like to be seen long on the terrace. You know the Moors do not permit men to go upon the roofs."

"But who is it you are talking about?" again inquired the elder sister of the excited Juanita.

"Who? why the Berber."

"What! the mountain chief who saved you from the kaid? It cannot be."

"But it is," replied Juanita; "did I not see him? Think you that no one has eyes for a good-looking gallant but yourself? I could tell him among ten thousand, if he were painted as black as a negro."

"Would that Hassan knew of this," exclaimed Isabel; "'tis upon this Berber that all our hopes hang; and little does the rais dream that he is in the city. Much I fear," continued Isabel, "that his presence here endangers his own liberty, and thus will diminish his power to aid us."

"Fear not, sister," replied the younger maiden; "the Berber is safe. Whatever danger surrounds him, he can take care of himself; and we, too, are safer for his presence. I no longer have the slightest dread of being shut up alone in this old house. I shall sleep soundly to-night."

"Take care that you do not lie awake, thinking of this mysterious chief," said Isabel.

Juanita was about to reply, but checked herself and held her breath. A low knocking was heard at the door.

"'Tis he!" exclaimed Juanita, starting and turning pale.

"Nonsense!" replied Isabel; "it is our neighbor Abdallah. He comes to see if our provisions are exhausted. Get a light, sister—it is growing so dark that we shall need it—while I go and let him in."

Isabel went to the door and paused to listen. The knocking was repeated, but it was clearly from neither Abdallah nor the rais, both of whom had concerted with the sisters signals for admission.

Some words were spoken in a low tone. Isabel put her ear to the wide key-hole of the ill-fitting, roughly made door, and recognized at once the familiar voice of Don Diego.

"'Tis I, Isabel, your cousin Orsolo. I know that you are

here. Let me in quickly for God's sake, before I am seen by the people of the street. I have much to say to you. Cousin Isabel, cousin Juanita, open the door."

Isabel hesitated for a moment, but he was a countryman and a relative, and she drew back the bolts and opened the door. The tall, stiff figure of Don Diego, clothed in the dirty rags of an old Moorish garment, stalked in. His arms were at once opened, but Isabel, shrinking back, escaped the intended embrace. Merely touching his hand, she glided across the court, followed by the don, into a long, narrow, but lofty room, occupying the whole height of the building, which Juanita had succeeded in dimly lighting by means of a wick of twisted linen placed in one corner of a square metallic cup filled with olive oil.

Toward Juanita the don attempted a more playful demonstration of affection; but, with a repelling shudder, the maiden eluded his grasp, and darted through the doorway into the court. Don Diego threw himself, with a gloomy look, upon the cushions of an old divan, and remained for a few moments without saying a word.

"And so," he said, suddenly directing a piercing gaze at Isabel, "methinks, sweet cousin, you greet not over kindly your humble relative. Isabel, you hate me."

There was something so harsh in his tones, so abrupt in his manner, that Isabel for a moment was unable to reply. The image of Don Diego, the stern, unyielding and ungenerous kinsman of Cadiz, rushed upon her mind and drove back the tide of friendly emotion that was flowing over her heart. It was with a slight degree of acerbity intermingling with the naturally tender tones of her voice that she replied:

"Indeed, cousin, do not say that; what but friendly feeling could have prompted me to address you the other morning, when I might so easily have passed you without speaking?"

"True, that was a friendly impulse, and I thank you for it. 'Twas lucky, indeed—and luckily I had the wit to improve it, by sending a begging renegado to follow your footsteps. But come, my sweet cousin, tell me the story of your adventures. Explain by what sad mischance the rose of the Guadalete has been transferred to the banks of the Ordom."

Isabel rapidly ran over the principal events that had occurred since the departure of Don Diego from Cadiz. Her father's appointment to office—the embarkation—the attack

of the Moors—her father's death, and the prominent circumstances since landing at Salee, that had resulted in placing her in the position of the moment.

Orsolo listened with a scowling brow, and in silence, until Isabel paused.

"And so," he exclaimed, in a sneering tone, while an affected smile distorted his sinister visage; "your English friend did not drown himself, as we supposed."

Isabel felt that she had done wrong to say a word in relation to Edward, and she stood without reply. But Orsolo followed up his remark with so many questions, and pressed her so closely, that she was compelled to admit that not only was he alive, but that hitherto he had escaped the chains of the slave, and that he was now concealed in Mequinez.

"And he expects to escape, and you—are to accompany him?" exclaimed Orsolo, thrusting his hand into his breast, as if clutching a dagger. The diabolical scowl upon his face made Isabel start back with fright—she looked out into the court—the figure of Juanita, pacing the opposite terrace, somewhat reassured her.

"The English dog! the cursed heretic!" exclaimed Orsolo, rising to his feet; "but I need not speak of him," he continued, suddenly suppressing every appearance of passion, and assuming a bland and gentle manner, "I need not speak of him—he can do nothing for you here. No more can this brother of his—this vile pirate—this perfidious infidel—and no more can you trust yourself with this Abdallah. Isabel, you are lost—I alone can save you—I will do so—you shall return with me to Spain. Hearken to me! The terms of my ransom are settled. From this day I am no longer a slave; I am detained until my ransom arrives, but I am as free to move about the streets of Mequinez, were it not for the insults of the populace, as any Moor of the city. Free myself, I can have no difficulty in buying your freedom and that of your sister. I will obtain permission of the Superior of the Spanish hospitium to remove you thither, and believe me, Isabel, I will not leave this country unless you go with me."

"But to do this, Isabel," continued the don, approaching her, and endeavoring to take her hand, "it will be necessary to call you my wife. Nay, start not. It will not be necessary to tell an untruth. One of the fathers of the hospitium can

unite us, and thus will be accomplished the design of our families, and the dearest wish of your father's heart."

"Indeed, cousin, it cannot be," replied Isabel, in a mournful voice, while a slight shudder ran through her frame.

The don marked the instinctive shrinking at the proposition, and a scowl of deadly malice again corrugated his brow.

"It must be, dearest cousin; it must be!" he replied. "As for that cursed English hound, he is powerless. Isabel, it must be!"

"Never!" exclaimed Isabel, energetically. "Cousin Orsolo, press me no further—I never, never can become your wife."

"Your liberty depends upon it."

"I shall die a slave then."

"But not alone liberty—your life—your honor. Think of the harem of some brutal Moor."

Isabel's cheek paled and her frame shook, but she replied in a steady voice: "Cousin Orsolo, why will you make me despise and detest you? 'Tis unkind—cruel of you thus to persecute me. Why offer me your aid on terms that I cannot accept? But I need it not—I shall be saved, unless, indeed, you are dastard enough to betray my residence here. Come, cousin, be generous—press this matter no further—I can never become your wife."

"You shall," hissed the don between his clenched teeth, as he sprang forward and grasped the maiden by the arm. "Girl! think you longer to thwart me? By Heaven and all the saints, you shall be my wife; right or wrong, fairly or forcibly, you shall be mine! And your English lover shall die; shall die, girl; and his carcass shall be thrown to the dogs and the buzzards!"

The don roughly shook the terrified girl. "Release me!" she faintly cried; but he kept his grasp upon her arm, and glared, with the expression of an infuriated demon, into her eyes.

Suddenly there was a gleam of steel, and the don started, and sprang back from the point of a dagger that was almost thrust into his face.

"What means this?" exclaimed Juanita, placing herself before her trembling sister. "Coward! vile, detestable coward! Think you that we are so powerless, so unpro-

tected?" and the young girl stepped forward with a gesture so fearless and energetic that Orsolo, unarmed as he was, judged it most prudent to retreat into the patio.

"Isabel your wife?" continued Juanita, following him to the threshold of the door: "never—better mate with the vilest infidel that walks the streets of Mequinez."

"My wife she shall be," shouted the don, as he stalked into the skeffa, and, drawing back the bolts, opened the street door. "And you, too, my gentle little cousin—I like your spirit even better than the tears of that soft one—and you, too, shall share the honor. A pious Mussulman, you know, can have more than one wife, and the creed is short: 'there is no God but God, and Mohammed is His Prophet.' To-morrow morning you shall have a renegado for a cousin, and, by the Heaven that I renounce, and the hell that I brave, to-morrow night shall see you, as well as your sister, a renegado's wife."

His last words were spoken in a loud tone, while holding the open door in his hands. As he stepped into the street he stumbled over a man, who was coiled up, Moorish fashion, at the door-sill. Don Diego started.

"'Tis no matter," he muttered, "even if he did overhear, '*Allah, il Allah rassoul, Mohammed Allah,*' will set it all right. It is not often that the Moors get such a proselyte as I am—a free man—one who has just paid his ransom. I shall be created a kaid at once. But first to make a bargain for the price of my apostacy with the kaid of the slaves—and then for love and revenge."

With his white and parched lips muttering, and the fires of demoniac passion raging at his heart, the don passed, absorbed in himself, along the streets. Nor did he perceive that he was closely followed by the man over whom he had stumbled as he made his retreat from the dagger of Juanita.

As soon as the door had closed upon him, the young girl let fall her weapon, and rapidly securing the bolts, darted back to her sister.

"We are lost," exclaimed Isabel. "And I, Juanita, have ruined all. Oh, why was I so weak as to admit him; or rather why was I so foolish as to speak to him in the street? Oh, I have ruined all—myself, you, Edward, and it may be, Hassan."

"Say not so, sister," replied Juanita. "Our friends are

powerful and resolute, and if we could only let them know of the threats of our kinsman, I feel sure that some plan could be devised to counteract them. Oh, that Abdallah would come!"

But Abdallah did not come. No friendly knock interrupted the silence of vague and depressing apprehension, and for an hour or more the sisters sat locked in each other's arms.

Suddenly there was a slight whizzing noise in the air, followed by the sound of something falling on the brick pavement of the patio.

Both maidens started with fear, but Juanita, recovering herself in a moment, seized the lamp and darted into the court. A piece of paper, attached to a leaden bullet, lay in sight. The young girl seized it, and running back to Isabel, the sisters proceeded, with trembling hands, to untie the string by which it was attached to the weight. They opened the note, but, to their great chagrin, the first words, although written in Roman characters, were in a language of which they were entirely ignorant. The words were pure Berber:

"*Elezad mourked heeou ougharb ekedhir ousherk.*" The sisters might have puzzled over them all night, were it not that upon turning the paper they found penciled in Spanish a translation of the Berber proverb:

"If the west wind don't bring it, the east wind will."

"What can it mean?" exclaimed Isabel.

Juanita jumped to her feet and waved the paper exultingly.

"Everything, sister, everything," she cried; "it means hope, courage, liberty."

"But whence comes it?" demanded Isabel.

"Why, sister, how dull you are," replied Juanita; "who but one could have sent it? Don't you see—what means the east wind—the wind from the mountains?"

"The Berber?" inquired Isabel.

"Certainly! I knew that it was he whom I saw on the terrace. Oh, Isabel, we are safe."

"God grant it," replied the elder sister; "but much I fear the malice of Don Diego. I doubt not the will of your Berber, for of that the rais has assured us; but much I doubt his power."

"Doubt nothing, sister," exclaimed Juanita, energetically; "Oh, if you had seen him, as I have, you could not doubt. I know, sister, that I have something here—at heart—that many a man lacks; courage, energy, will; and this consciousness made me see, and feel, the exact counterparts of those qualities in him—but how overwhelming the sense. I saw myself, but it was myself magnified into a giant. Oh, sister, shall I tell you how I felt when he left me waiting for your arrival on the hillside? It seemed to me as if I had suddenly became two persons, and as if the one that was most myself was mounted on a big black steed, and was flying over bush and rock, up the hill."

"My dear child!" exclaimed Isabel, "this Berber has turned your head—and your heart, too, I suspect. Juanita, you are in love!'

"Oh, no, Isabel," exclaimed Juanita, with an earnest simplicity. "I am not in love, but I admire him; I venerate him."

"Venerate him! For his years, I suppose? I think you said he was about twenty-two. Venerable man! The infirmities of age, I trust, will not prevent his aiding us. Come, sister, let us go upon the terrace; this room is stifling, and we can better discuss in the open air a hero of such proportions as your Berber."

The sisters paced the enclosed roof, or stretched themselves on a cushioned carpet beneath an awning of tent-cloth that covered one angle of the battlements. Isabel's unwonted tone of badinage was kept up for some time, and the whole conversation was of a more cheerful cast than could have been expected after the propositions and threats of Don Diego. This was owing partly to their disbelief in the intentions of the Don to turn Mohammedan, and ignorance of the power that his apostacy would give him—partly to the encouragement afforded by the Berber's note—but, more than all, to that principle in human nature that does not permit a long and uninterrupted indulgence to the stronger and more active emotions of the mind. The ocean of passion has its tides, and it is rarely possible to keep the level forever up to high water mark. The law of love is that of ebb and flow, or stagnation and decay. The sternest grief that ever lay like a pall on a human heart will wear threadbare in places, and let in the light of day again upon the sentiments and the affec-

tions; the most mortal fear that ever barred our pathway will in time grow familiar, and cease to be terrible. It may be a lion, and a fierce, formidable lion still, but, instead of standing forever in despair, we shake the beast by the paw, and pass on. No one can afford to be frightened at any danger forever.

CHAPTER XVIII.

It was the time of the Ramadan, when, for a period of forty days the Mohammedans rigorously abstain from food, and even drink, during the day. The instant, however, the mueddin announces, by his call to *El Mogareb*,* that the day has closed, the hungry believer hurries to indemnify himself for his privations, by an indulgence in food, limited only by his pecuniary means and the capacity of his stomach. The slightest return of appetite is closely watched, and eagerly taken advantage of, and four or five times in the night do the wealthier disciples of the Prophet fortify the inner man against the attacks of hunger during the coming day. That there may be no excuse for breaking fast in the day time, trumpets are sounded by the mueddins at intervals during the night, to waken people to their meals, and just previous to *Es Sebah*, messengers from the mosques rush wildly through the streets uttering loud cries, and beating on the doors with heavy clubs. To the higher classes—those who can afford to sleep all day and eat all night—the Ramadan is not a very trying time, but to those who have to labor by daylight, the fast is one of considerable severity.

The Mequinezians were all occupied in their houses with the evening feast, and consequently the streets were quiet

* Every Mussulman must say his prayers five times a day. The first time at the first point of dawn, or when the sun is at eighteen degrees under the horizon in the East, which is called *Es-sebah*. The second time in the afternoon, when the shade of the gnomon, placed perpendicularly in the sun, shows the fourth part of its length—this prayer is called *Ed-douhour*. The third prayer is made when the shade of the gnomon is equal to its own length – this prayer is called *El-assar*. The fourth takes place a moment after sunset, and is called *El-mogareb*; and the fifth is at the last moment of twilight—it is called *El aaschir*—Ali Bey.

and deserted as Don Diego made his way back to the quarter of the Christian slaves.

Without molestation he passed on, and in a few steps reached an open gate leading to a small court, around which were ranged several long rooms. Through an archway at the further side of the court, could be seen an immense inclosure, filled with little thatched hovels, hardly as large as pig-sties, and not half so clean, in which were lodged several hundred Christian slaves. These were common laborers who had been found fit for nothing but carrying stone and mortar for the Sultan's buildings. The mechanics and skilled workmen were distributed in other quarters, and more closely watched.

Some of the guards were engaged over heaps of embers in cooking the materials for their evening meal; others were solemnly employed in thrusting enormous handfuls of coos-coosoo into their mouths, from dishes that had been brought in by children and slaves; while others, stuffed to repletion, were rolled up in their haicks on the floors and pavements, or squatting around the walls, were looking with the gravity of satiated gluttony upon the movements of their companions.

Orsolo's entrance excited no attention. He was looked upon as a ransomed man, and if he chose to run the risks of the street, it was not the business of the guard to hinder him. They were placed there to prevent Moors from coming in, rather than to keep Christians from going out; and why should they interfere with a Kaffir who was no longer a slave, and who would receive nothing more than his deserts if he should be knocked on the head by some Christian-hating believer, or stoned to death by the rabble?

The don crossed the court, and paused under the further arch, where he could look over the enclosure of huts, and listen to the voices of the slaves rising in a loud chorus of ribaldry and blasphemy. Some were wrangling and cursing; some shouting, laughing, and strumming guitars to obscene words; and some praying and groaning in pain and despair. Slowly he paced to and fro, along the arched passage, but every now and then he would start forward with a rapid step, gesticulate violently, mutter to himself, and then wiping the cold perspiration from his brow, and the flecks of foam from his lips, his movements would subside into a more gentle gait. Terrible was the contest between love and hate and the thirst

for revenge on the one hand, and his religious scruples—his fear of eternal punishment—his detestation of the Moors and Moorish life on the other; and so absorbing, too, that he heeded not the presence of a figure that, gliding from the court, threw itself upon the pavement of the passage, as if for sleep.

For nearly three hours did he continue to pace the arched passage. Suddenly stopping, he raised his clenched hand, and violently smote his brow.

"I'll do it," he exclaimed, in a loud voice. "By all the fiends! I'll do it. Surely," he muttered in a lower tone, "I shall find some means in time to leave this country, when there will no difficulty in making my peace with the Church. But if I should not—if I should die a Mohammedan—why, then, hell may be my portion, but I will have her—I will have revenge." And turning with a rapid step, Don Diego entered the court of the guards.

Addressing himself to a Spanish renegado, he expressed his wish for an audience of Hammed ben Slowek, chief kaid of the slaves. The request was communicated to the captain of the guard, who opened wide his eyes in astonishment at such unheard-of presumption.

"The kaid sleeps, or perchance he is engaged in his devotions," replied the captain. "The Kaffir can wait."

"Tell him," replied Don Diego, in a raised tone, "that I must see him. My business is important. A Christian soul is knocking for admission at the gate of the Prophet, and who dares say, wait till the morning, and it shall be opened to him."

This announcement created something of a sensation. The captain sprang to his feet, and the various members of the corps huddled with excited countenances around the tall figure of the sullen, savage-looking Spaniard.

A dozen voices urged him to repeat the customary formula of the Mohammedan faith.

"I will repeat nothing, say nothing, do nothing," exclaimed Orsolo, "until I have seen the kaid."

The Moors saw that it would be useless to urge him further, and forthwith a messenger was dispatched to that officer. In a few minutes he returned, and the don, accompanied by a tumultuous and excited escort of more than half the *corps de garde*, was hurried across the street,

and, passing a low door, entered a dark, dingy *skeffa*, or vestibule, hardly large enough to contain half a dozen persons. But in this particular it differed not from the audience rooms of the highest ministers of state.

In a few minutes the kaid made his appearance from the court, and, squatting without ceremony upon a small morocco cushion by the inner door, demanded the cause of this visit.

"My business can be communicated only to my lord, the kaid," replied Orsolo. "I must speak with him alone."

"Dog!" exclaimed the kaid, "do you mean to say that you have dared to set your foot in a saint's house for any other purpose than to renounce your idolatrous belief?"

The kaid spoke angrily. Although a bigoted Mohammedan, and, as such, desirous of making proselytes under ordinary circumstances, he was too much interested in the receipt of the Christian's promised ransom to fully relish the idea of his escaping the payment of it by apostacy.

"I come to repeat the creed of the Prophet," replied Orsolo, in a tone of dogged determination; "also to speak to my lord the kaid in relation to two Christian females, and I wish to say what I have to say in private."

At this the kaid started, and ordered the room to be cleared of all except the interpreter.

"Speak! what is it you have to say!" he eagerly demanded.

"I was a Christian and a Spaniard," replied the don. "I now renounce my religion and my country. I am a Mussulman and a Moor—and this without compulsion—of my own free will. I am not even a slave—I am a free man—my ransom is at hand; and yet"—Orsolo paused, while a shudder ran through his frame, and the cold sweat bedewed his forehead, "and yet," he continued, clenching his teeth, and nerving himself for the dreadful confession, "I give up all for El Islam. *'La ilaha, ila Allah Mohammed Rasoul Allah!'*"

There was a struggle for a moment in the mind of the kaid, between his bigotry and his avarice—between his zeal for El Islam and his itching for the Christian's ransom. But bigotry finally prevailed. The kaid sprang to his feet, and threw his arms around the apostate.

"*Alhamdo Lellahi!* Praise be to God!" he exclaimed, kissing him on the head and breast. "*Sobhana Allahi! Allahu Akibar! Alhamdo Lillahi!*" and pulling him down

to a seat by his side, the kaid continued to press his hands and kiss him on different parts of his person, amid a shower of congratulations and devotional ejaculations, for full five minutes.

It was with a sense of the most bitter humiliation that Orsolo endured the caresses of the negro, but he dared not resist. He even made a show of returning them, and several times forced his parched and quivering lips to do homage to the black, brawny, and not over-clean hands of the saint.

Suddenly pausing, the kaid looked inquiringly at the new convert.

"And what of the ransom that is on its way from Spain?" he demanded.

"Of course," replied Orsolo, "as a Mussulman and a Moor, I need pay no ransom."

A dark frown gathered on the countenance of the kaid.

"But," continued Orsolo, observing the expression, and lowering his tone as he bent toward the kaid, "if I pay no ransom for my freedom, that shall make no difference with the purse of my lord the kaid. I have a favor to ask—a small one—one that, as a convert to El Islam, I have the right to ask of the Sultan, but one for which I am willing to pay half the sum that has been agreed upon for my ransom, to any one who will help me to obtain it.

"Listen!" continued the don; but there was no need for the direction: the attention of the kaid was thoroughly aroused. "There are two Christian women in the city who have been retained by their captor, one of the corsairs of Salee, for his own purposes. He has forfeited all claim to them by secreting them, contrary to the Sultan's order. I want them for my harem."

"Are they the women captured by Hassan Herach?" asked the kaid, in an eager voice.

"The same," replied Orsolo, somewhat astonished at the evidences of intense interest exhibited by his companion.

"Where are they now?" demanded the kaid, clutching the Spaniard's arm with a vigorous grasp. "Do you know where that dog of a rais has hidden them?"

"My lord must pardon me," replied Orsolo, "if I keep their place of concealment a secret until I am assured that they shall be mine."

The kaid's eyes flashed and the frown on his brow deepened; but suddenly smoothing his face, he replied in a subdued tone:

"'Tis but for the sake of revenge on that villain, Hassan Herach, that I wish to know. Tell me where they are; let me convict him of keeping back two of his captives, and the women shall be yours."

"If I can but discover their hiding-place," thought Hammed, "it will be hard if I do not find means to secure them to myself, and finger this renegado's money into the bargain." His thoughts engendered a corresponding expression, and there was something so sinister in his scowling eyes, and so hollow in his assumed smile, that Orsolo paused in terror. His heart sickened within him as the conviction of the kaid's insincerity came upon him. He felt that he was on the point of losing all for which he had sacrificed so much, and with the energy of desperation he laid his hand upon the kaid's arm.

"Look you, Sidi Hammed ben Slowek," he exclaimed, "I am not to be trifled with. These women I will have. I will appeal to the Sultan. I will make my demand known in the mosque on the day of my initiation. I will shout it to the populace in the streets. Think you that I shall not be in a position—I, a volunteer convert to the true faith—to enforce so trifling a demand as that for two miserable, worthless Christian slaves?"

The kaid saw that he had a determined man to deal with, and that perhaps the safest course would be to compromise matters, and divide the spoil. Turning to Orsolo with an air of frankness, he extended his hand.

"Take one," he said, "and leave the other to me."

Orsolo hesitated, and looked inquiringly into the kaid's eyes.

"Take one, we are friends, are you and sure of the other. Insist upon both, we are enemies, and you will get neither."

"But tell me," demanded Orsolo, "why is it that you trouble yourself for a Christian woman?"

"Spaniard, I have seen her—she has been in my arms—her breath came into my face as she lay across my saddle-bow, and the zephyrs of Spring from the plains of Marasche are not more sweet. When I lost her, I lost a pearl—a diamond—a star. But what could I do? I was alone with that

son of Eblis, the Berber—may the curse of Allah light on him and his race; but so soon as I learned that by some means, I know not how, she had been recovered by the rais, I swore, by the arch of *El Serat*, by the sacred waters of *Zemzem*, that she should be mine. Spaniard, give her up to me, and the other shall be yours!"

"You mean the tallest and slenderest of the two?" gloomily inquired Orsolo.

"The one," replied the kaid, "who sits on her horse like a bird on a bough, and who walks on the ground as if she were stepping on flowers, and each flower a friend."

Orsolo looked at the burly speaker, and a feeling of compunction came over him as he thought of the fair face and delicate form of the doomed Juanita. But it was too late for repentance. He had taken the fatal plunge, and both sisters must go down into the pit with him! And the young Englishman! "Ha!" muttered the don, "there is that account to settle; but time enough when I have secured my bride; he can wait—he cannot escape me." And turning to the kaid, he grasped his proffered hand, and signified an assent to his proposition.

With many oaths on either side the bargain was ratified, and dispositions made to seize upon their victims. Ah! could those victims have known the horrid contract of which they were the subjects, they would not have lain them down, after pacing the terrace to a late hour, and, locked in each other's arms beneath the awning, have slumbered so quietly the while.

A guard of half-a-dozen men was ordered out, and at the head of it Orsolo and the kaid proceeded to the house that had been allotted to the sisters. The first faint glimmerings of morn—the grey dust thrown up in the sky by the prancings of Apollo's chargers—were flying overhead when they reached the door.

Don Diego knocked several times, and called to the sisters, but no answer was returned. It was an object to enter the house without attracting much attention, or exciting a tumult, and the kaid, knowing that he had no especial warrant for what he was doing, and that it might be dangerous to offend the prejudices of the town's-people by forcing the door, waited until Don Diego had exhausted all his efforts to obtain a response. But finding, at length, that there were no

other means, and that the darkness would soon disappear and uncover his operations, he directed his men to throw themselves with violence against the door. The fastenings were old and feeble, and yielding with a crash, the door swung into the skeffa, and the party rushed through the vestibule into the court.

All was silent and deserted. The rooms were open, but not an occupant. The terrace was equally vacant. Something on the pavement of the court attracted their attention; it was a large pool of fresh blood. Spots of blood were traced up the stairs leading to the roof, and several pieces of clothing lying about were moist and warm with it. The don and the kaid looked at each other in doubt and amazement. It was evident that their intended victims were gone; but where, and how? And the blood! what could have happened to them."

"Better anything," whispered the conscience of Don Orsolo, "than the sacrifice to which you had doomed them."

And the wretched renegade's conscience was right. Better even death itself than the common, but none the less terrible, sacrifice of maiden innocence, when that sacrifice is unconsecrated by the holy spirit of love; but better a thousand deaths than when the sacrifice is desecrated by all the vilest, most brutal and diabolical passions of the human heart.

CHAPTER XIX.

We left Fatima, after her sudden, headlong descent from the terrace, engaged in sharpening a large knife, and in performing sundry mysterious incantations and magical ceremonies over a small earthen pot that was bubbling on a furnace of charcoal in a corner of the large court.

Fatima was a native of Bambarra, whence she had been brought across the desert by the slave-dealers of Fez. She was already grown to womanhood, and consequently had brought with her the prejudices and superstitious practices of her countrymen, which, when converted to the faith of her captors, instead of giving up, she continued to mingle in admirable mental confusion with the rites and doctrines of

El Islam. She believed as well in Obi as in Allah; in the virtues of the fetish, and in the efficacy of amulets from the Koran; in the power of the gingams or priests, and in the sanctity of marabouts and saints.

On almost all other subjects the contents of her mind were equally in a jumble, but there was one point upon which her reason, her faith and her affections were perfectly clear. She loved Xaripha with the whole strength of her passionate, energetic, bigoted, and ignorant mind. She had nursed her when an infant. She had watched over her with all a mother's anxiety. She felt as if she were her own child. And now, should a rival have it in her power to make her darling miserable? Fatima looked up to the gallery where Xaripha sat, and energetically shook her head.

"Yah! how white her face is," she muttered to herself. "He make her stop painting her cheeks, and now he take all the blood away, too—but this," she continued, making a menacing gesture in the direction of the adjoining house, "shall make somebody's heart as white as her face; I know—yah, yah!" And the old woman resumed, in a low, chanting voice, her incantations and prayers.

At length the dish that she was watching seemed to be cooked to suit her, and taking it off the fire, she allowed the contents to cool. With much muttering, and divers contortions of the body, she now proceeded to anoint various parts of her person with the unctuous product of her magical distillation—and ended by applying some of the same substance to the blade of the knife.

It was not until nearly three o'clock in the morning that Xaripha, who had been wandering about upon the terrace and the galleries of the courts, retired to her sleeping apartments, leaving Fatima coiled up, apparently in a sound slumber, upon a mat in the open court. A few minutes afterwards the old negress started to her feet, and after ascertaining that the other slaves were asleep, she passed on to her master's room, and listened for some time at his door.

"Yah! he sleep like a lion," she exclaimed—"'Tis only Lelia Xaripha who can't sleep—but I think she won't come out again. Poor Xaripha saghira! She has cried all the tears out of her eyes. I guess she shut 'em up now till morning."

The old woman cautiously traversed the outer court, and

unlocking a small store-room, brought out a ladder of a few steps, used for reaching the various articles of provender, such as dates, dried grapes, bags of cooscoosoo, etc., hanging against the wall. The ladder was light, and without difficulty she carried it up the narrow staircase to the roof, where she placed it against the wall of the turret. Re-entering the turret, she secured a bundle of cord made of palmetto fibre, and returning to the ladder, ascended as rapidly as her obesity and her age would permit. The ladder did not quite reach to the roof of the tower, and it was with a degree of exertion that compelled her to roll over on her back and wait for breath, that she drew herself to the top.

It was a delicious balmy night, but intensely dark—a heavy canopy of high clouds, while it prevented the dew from falling, shut out the stars, and left nothing to mitigate the intense blackness except the occasional glimmer of lamp-light shooting upward from the open patios, and playing on the white-washed walls.

The house in which the sisters were lodged was but one story, and consequently from the terrace to the top of the turret of Abdallah's house was a height of nearly twenty feet; not much for an active man, but something for a fat and feeble woman. Nothing daunted, however, Fatima, as soon as she had recovered her breath, gave one look below and proceeded to fasten her ladder of cords around the dentils of the serrated eaves. Boldly and noiselessly she threw herself over, and in a few moments stood upon the terrace below.

All was silent. Fatima listened—she heard nothing to indicate that there was any one asleep on the terrace as is generally the custom among the Moors in pleasant weather. A lamp was in one of the rooms below, and through the half opened door flung its light into the court.

"She must be down there," muttered the negress, and grasping her knife, she groped her way to the staircase, and descended.

Cautiously pushing open the door, she entered the room, and looked around. A piece of carpet and a few cushions, were all that it contained. Crossing the court, the old woman listened at the doors of the other three rooms, and then trying them, and finding them unlocked, she pushed them open and entered, but no sounds indicated that the rooms were occupied. She returned to the first room, and detaching the lamp from

the wall, proceeded to examine the other apartments by its light.

For a few moments Fatima stood quite bewildered in the court. It seemed as if some djin must have spirited the objects of her search away.

"I think I don't make that fetish strong enough," she exclaimed. "Yah, yah! I think it must be a djin, or may be, Eblis himself, but I don't care. If I once see the devil I tell him what I think, that I will. Yah, yah! But I hav'nt looked round the terrace—perhaps I find her up there." So saying, Fatima, with the lamp in one hand and her long, sharp knife in the other, ascended the stairs.

As she raised the lamp, the light fell upon the awning we have mentioned, in the further angle of the battlements; cautiously she advanced until she stood before it, and then stooping, she placed the lamp upon the terrace floor, and looked in. The sisters were there asleep; and a beautiful picture they made, as half sitting, half lying, and almost buried in the piles of cushions covering its thick-tufted carpet, they reposed in happy unconsciousness of the danger impending over them. A picture of intense Orientalism—such as can never be paralleled, except upon a Summer's night on the terraced roofs of some Mohammedan town.

Juanita lay with her face hidden in the cushions, her black hair loose, and enveloping neck and shoulders in a thick, inky, billowy flood of curls, and her arm thrown across her sister's breast. Isabel lay with her face turned upward—one hand grasped Juanita's arm, the other was thrown carelessly off upon the cushion.

Deliberately Fatima knelt by the side of the Gaditana. There was light enough to reveal the fair features of the elder sister—the graceful contour, the placid expression, but not a sentiment of pity or compunction stirred in the heart of Fatima. In fact, the extreme beauty, enhanced in the eyes of the negress by a certain fulness and roundness of outline, only aroused a sterner emotion in the inexorable avenger of Xaripha's wrongs.

"She is too handsome," murmured Fatima; "she cannot live in the same world with Xaripha. Yah! yah! she is too beautiful! I don't like to kill her, but I must do it—and the other one—ah, poor child—I don't want to harm her, she never do any harm to Xaripha. I am sorry for her when she

wake up and find her sister dead; but this one—oh, she is too round and full and beautiful! Yah! yah! I must kill her, I must put the obi knife right into her heart."

Cautiously the old woman leaned over the body of her sleeping victim. The long sharp knife gleamed in her hand; she raised it on high, and aimed the point of it full at the exposed breast of the unconscious Isabel.

There was the sound of footsteps on the terrace—a scream—and the next instant a female form darted like lightning along the roof and threw itself upon the kneeling negress. The threatened blow was partially given, but it fell short of its mark. Fatima was pushed backward, and almost tumbled into the court. The knife was twisted from her grasp, inflicting, as she rolled over and over upon the roof, a deep cut in her arm. A terrible spluttering of Arabic and negro exclamations issued from her lips, as she groped for a moment for her knife, and then sprang, almost wild with passion, to her feet. But the moment she confronted her unexpected antagonist her eye quailed, and her arm fell.

"Xaripha," she exclaimed, "Xaripha saghira! yah, yah, I think it is a djin."

"Away with you!" exclaimed Xaripha, energetically. "Wretch! murderess! away with you!"

Xaripha turned to the sisters, who, now fully awake, had started from their reclining positions in vague alarm.

"Thank God!" she exclaimed in Spanish, "I was not too late; one moment more—ah! I shudder to think of it," and Xaripha covered her eyes with her hands.

"What is the matter? what has happened?" demanded the sisters in a breath.

Xaripha hesitated for a moment. "It will be safest, señoritas, for us to go below, where I will explain the affair to you. I am afraid that we may have already attracted attention from some of the higher house-tops, or from the minarets of the mosques."

"And this woman," exclaimed Juanita, going up to the crest-fallen Fatima—"what of her? See, she is wounded. Come, come below, where we can find something to stanch this bleeding."

Fatima sullenly shook off the kindly grasp of the young girl. Her mistress sternly ordered her to descend to the court. The old woman cast a suspicious look at Xaripha, as

if still questioning whether she was not some deceitful djin, who had assumed the form of her favorite in order to balk her of her revenge, but she obeyed. She, however, resolutely persisted in refusing all assistance. In silence she wiped the blood from her arm, and then thrusting a handkerchief around the wound, moved off with gloomy brow, ascended again to the terrace, and from thence by her rope ladder to the turret of her own house.

Xaripha pushed aside the half-opened wicket in one of the folding doors, and motioned to the sisters to enter. Stepping in after them, she raised the lamp to Isabel's face, and gazed at her for some time without speaking. Isabel returned the gaze with a look of wonder and curiosity, which gradually grew deeper and deeper as the bright glittering orbs of the Moorish maiden, beaming with the expressions of contending emotions, remained fixed upon her.

Generous admiration and burning jealousy chased each other in successive waves over the pale face of Xaripha. But at last the more noble wave swelled, and, impelled by a breath of scorn for her own weakness, rolled proudly on, and, overpassing its rival, filled up each inequality of expression with the flood-tide of calm and unselfish emotion. Xaripha turned, with a sigh, and placed the lamp against the wall.

"Indeed, señorita, you are very beautiful," exclaimed Xaripha, taking the hand of Isabel; "more beautiful than I had dreamed of; I wonder not at any one loving you. I should rather wonder at any one seeing you and not loving you—you are made to be loved. But," continued Xaripha, seeing the puzzled expression of the sisters' countenances, "you are waiting for an explanation of my presence here, while I am detaining you with my idle admiration; and yet it is not wholly idle nor useless. There is a meaning in my admiration, to me at least; it does me good to admire your beauty—to admit it fully—to bow to it."

Xaripha spoke passionately, paused for a moment, and again looked moodily at Isabel.

"And you, too, señorita," she exclaimed, turning quickly and with a pleasant smile to Juanita—"you, too, are beautiful—your beauty is yet in bud; but much I pity any woman who shall have you for a rival. But come, why should we stand here so awkwardly?" And twining her arms around

the sisters, the young Moorish girl pulled them down to a seat on the cushions.

"You know my father, Abdallah?" she inquired. "The house adjoining is ours. To-night I could not sleep; I rose from my couch and ascended the terrace. I saw a ladder resting against the turret wall. I climbed up it, when, to my astonishment, I found another ladder of ropes leading down to your terrace. I knew that it must have been placed there by my old nurse and slave—she whom you saw. I descended. Thank God, I arrived in time to save you—"

A shudder ran through the frame of Xaripha; she paused again, and closed her eyes.

"From what?" demanded Juanita. "What was the danger?"

"From death. Fatima was about to take the life of your sister—a moment more and the keen blade would have been buried in her breast."

"Ah! say you so? And for what reason? Who could have prompted her?"

"No one. She is ignorant—prejudiced—full of strange notions, and somewhat infirm of intellect; and on one subject she can hardly be considered in her right mind."

"Poor creature!" exclaimed Juanita, "she is then a maniac."

"No, not so," replied Xaripha. "Allah has not wholly called her soul to himself, but he has cast a shadow upon it, and that shadow is her love for me; she dotes on me—she sees nothing else in the world but me; she lives for me—she would die for me."

"But why should she attempt my life?" demanded Isabel.

"Ah! poor Fatima! she is jealous."

"Jealous! of whom?"

"Jealous of you. She cannot bear that any one more beautiful than I am should live." Xaripha spoke hesitatingly, while the blood rushed to her cheeks.

Isabel mused for a moment. "Has this slave of yours ever seen us before?"

"I believe that she has seen you, señorita," replied Xaripha. "I know not that she has seen your sister."

"Strange!" murmured Isabel. "When and how, think you, has she seen me?"

"At sunset, from the loop-hole of the turret."

Isabel looked inquiringly at the speaker. Xaripha's brow became crimson, and her eyes fell beneath the Spanish girl's glance.

Isabel's face lighted up with a peculiar expression; she threw her arms around Xaripha and embraced her.

"I think I begin to comprehend Fatima's groundless jealousy," she whispered.

"Groundless!" exclaimed Xaripha, raising her head.

But further question was cut short by Juanita, who raised her hand for silence, and uttered a low "Hist!"

Again there was a sound as of something falling into the court. Juanita rushed out of the room, and in a moment returned with a piece of paper, on which was written in Spanish: "Danger is at hand—open the door—I dare not knock—open quickly, I must see you."

"What can it mean?" exclaimed Isabel; "can this be from Hassan?"

"Not so," replied Juanita, who still held the note in her hand. "'Tis from the Berber;" and the young girl turned to step into the skeffa, or small vestibule, leading to the door. But Xaripha and Isabel both stretched out their hands to intercept her movements.

"Hold!" exclaimed the elder sister. "Have a care—you may be deceived. Perhaps this is some trick of our cousin Orsolo."

Juanita hesitated an instant. "I cannot be deceived," she replied, pointing to a few words in pencil at the bottom of the note.

"But I understand it not," said Isabel, taking the paper. "'A ride on a black steed, and a kiss between the ground and the saddle.' What does it mean?'

The color overspread Juanita's cheek; but turning, she made an impatient gesture in reply, and darted across the court into the dark skeffa leading to the street door. A slight tap of the finger was heard, and Juanita, with a trembling hand and a beating heart, drew back the bolts. The door was at once pushed open from the outside, giving admission to a person who will be introduced more appropriately, perhaps, to the reader, in a new chapter.

CHAPTER XX.

THE stranger entered, and closing with a rapid motion the door behind him, instantly threw his arms around the young girl with a movement which, in the dim light of the skeffa, she could neither see nor elude.

Juanita trembled and struggled, although she shrieked not, nor felt fear as he pressed her to his breast, and deliberately bowed his mouth to her lips. It was but the instinct of delicacy, and a sentiment of feminine pride, and Juanita felt with a thrill of fear that these were failing her, and that there was creeping over her a reckless and dreamy sensation—a disposition to return an embrace which she knew she ought to resent as a deadly insult.

"Fear not, señorita, you are not in the arms of your admirer, the kaid," he whispered, in a voice that thrilled through every nerve of Juanita's frame.

There was something, however, in the remark that aroused her spirit, and throwing back her head, she struggled to free herself.

"Unhand me!" she exclaimed, energetically; "this is cruel —ungenerous—"

"And ill-timed, you may say, with equal truth," said the young man, deliberately releasing her from his arms. "I grant it all, señorita, but the taste of what you wot of still lingers on my lips, and the temptation is strong to renew its freshness. However, I will let you go free now; but mind you, señorita, I shall give you a thousand kisses yet—aye, a thousand times a thousand! And what is more, you shall return them all; nay, señorita, I feel the boiling of your blood, and I see even in this gloom the flash of your eyes, but it will not avail to resist. I have been thinking over the matter since I saw you, and I am determined that you shall love me—desperately love me. I am resolved that it shall be so. But come, we have no time to talk about it now—time presses, and death, or worse than death, will soon be knocking at the door."

A strange whirl of emotions filled the young girl's breast.

In all her dreams of love—and she had had her dreams, young as she was—the possibility of being wooed in such an abrupt, off-hand, even impudent manner, had never occurred to her. Her pride was touched—her delicacy offended—still there was a charm in the very manner of the young man who so boldly avowed his determination to compel her love. Juanita felt vexed at being thus resolutely and familiarly treated; but still more vexed at feeling her indignation qualified by a sentiment of secret pleasure. Without reply, she led the way across the court. The Berber followed, pausing at the threshold of the room, and letting his eyes fall with an expression of surprise, upon the figure of Xaripha.

The maiden had been educated in none of the prejudices of her countrywomen; but the appearance of the young and handsome stranger, who had the garb and mien of a Moor, somewhat startled her. Hastily loosing the silken handkerchief from around her head, she let the folds fall over her face, so as to conceal all but the large black eyes.

Juanita, in answer to the young man's glance of inquiry, introduced him to her sister and Xaripha.

"The daughter of my friend Abdallah," said the young man, bowing with grace, and advancing to Xaripha, "will not think that I fail to honor her extraordinary beauty, when I say that she must depart at once. Your countryman has renounced his religion!" he continued, turning to the sisters; "and he has betrayed your secret. By this time the guard of the kaid of the slaves is on its way hither for your apprehension."

"Ha! can it be?" exclaimed Isabel. "Oh, how weak and wicked was the impulse that bade me speak to him!"

"'Twas generous, señorita," replied the Berber; "and therefore it could not have been wrong."

"Alas!" said Isabel, "I have not even that excuse; it was a mere thoughtless, motiveless impulse. 'Twas the familiar tone—the voice of a countryman—the sound of my native tongue, that forced his name from my lips without will or purpose of mine. Oh, 'twas weak—'twas wicked to risk so much—to peril this dear child's safety as well as my own!"

Xaripha stood in silence, listening to the conversation. Few girls in her position—bearing her supposed relations to Isabel—could have repressed an emotion of pleasure at the prospect of her rival's removal from her path. But Xaripha

was generous and pure of soul; quick and passionate in temperament, like all her race; and with the germs of evil lying in her breast, her education had afforded no opportunity for the development of any but the better qualities of her heart. Without companions of her own sex—sole mistress of her father's household—sole object of his affections—her life had been a calm and balmy Spring day, varied only by the flashes of brighter sunshine that occasionally gleamed through the mists of her imagination.

"What do you propose shall be done?" interposed Xaripha, addressing the Berber. "The kaid will care nothing for the sanctity of a house known to be uninhabited by Moors, and the door will yield to a push."

"We must leave the house," replied the Berber, "and that quickly. On the further side of this wall is a vacant space, where stands the dragon-tree you must have often seen from your terrace, and beyond that an old, crumbling uninhabited house. 'Tis my plan to lower these two ladies to the terrace of that house, where they can remain for a day or two unmolested. It can be very easily done," and the Berber produced a coil of rope made of strips of Cordovan leather, from beneath his djellabeah.

"No," exclaimed Xaripha; "they shall go with me."

"It is impossible, señorita," replied the Berber. "The guard is by this time in the street; and if not, there are passers-by who would note every motion. You can reach your door in safety; but it would not answer for these ladies to attempt it."

"We need not go by the street," replied Xaripha. "We will leave this house in the way in which I entered it—over the turret yonder, by a ladder of rope."

"Ha!" exclaimed the Berber, laughing, "that will do—that will circumvent them. But what will Abdallah say? he may not like the risk. However, it is only for a day, when another asylum may be found."

Xaripha's assurances soon removed all scruples in relation to her father, from the minds of the sisters. The Berber still had his doubts as to whether Abdallah would be willing to run the risk of secreting them in his own house for any length of time; but at the moment, Xaripha's generous proposition was not to be refused, and he urged its instant acceptance.

"I fear you will not think me very gallant in pressing your departure," he said; "but darkness is a good cover to other things than love-making, and much I fear we shall have but little of it. Would that your escalade could be made in the daylight; I would not envy the Patriarch Jacob his vision."

Collecting a few articles of apparel, and putting out the light, the sisters led the way to the terrace, followed by Xaripha and the Berber.

Xaripha was the first to attempt the ladder; a dozen loops, attached to the principal cord, made as many steps; and in a moment she was at the top of the tower. Isabel next essayed the ascent, which she accomplished with rather more difficulty, but in equal safety.

Juanita's foot was in the loop, when the Berber, who had been steadying the rope for her sister, took her arm and drew her back.

"One moment, señorita," he exclaimed. "I have something to say to you. You will see the rais; tell him that I have received his messages, but that it has been impossible for me to meet him. Indeed, at present it would be useless. I know what he requires; but the Sultan's forces have gathered in overwhelming numbers, and my men are shut up in the hills. Tell him he must wait a few days, when I shall be in a condition to afford him the assistance he desires."

"But you," exclaimed Juanita; "are you in no danger here?" And the maiden laid her hand upon the young man's arm."

"In danger, it may be," he replied; "but it matters not. I have my objects, and I must run some risk."

"Be not overbold," replied Juanita.

"Fear not, señorita. I have resources and I have friends. Ay, even in this very city, if I chose to give the word, I could create such a commotion as has not disturbed the repose of the Sultan for many a day. There are hundreds of Berbers who, although of different tribes, and hereditary enemies in the hills, would, here in the city, rally in an instant to the call of the chief of the Beni Mozarg. But that would be a small game. I, señorita, am playing for a larger stake."

"And that stake—" exclaimed Juanita, with interest.

"That stake, señorita," interrupted the Berber, "is empire. Come closer to me, and I'll whisper my secret. Let me secure the union of our tribes, and I will drive these Mussulman

dogs, these Shereefs, with their pretended descent from their Prophet—back to their deserts. I will build up what their jealousy has torn down. I will replace what their bigotry has destroyed. I will furrow this waste, desolate empire with the marks of industry. I will adorn it with the monuments of science and art. I will cover it with cities, and I will fill the cities with the temples of Christ."

"You, a Christian?" eagerly exclaimed Juanita.

"Did you think me a paynim or a pagan, señorita? Know you not that this land was once Christian, and that some few of our tribes still retain a spark from the old altars? Yes, I am a Christian, but to one of your church I might better be without any religion. Better be a heathen than a heretic! Ha! señorita?"

"So would say our churchmen at home," replied Juanita, "but I have often been called a heretic myself by Father Padilla, and I fear I should not hate you as I ought. But how is it that you are a heretic, señor? Methinks I have heard that St. Augustine and St. Cyprian were Fathers of the African Church."

"You are right," replied the Berber, "but the Donatists were numerous, and when the Vandals, who were also followers of the doctrines of Arius, came to their assistance, your Latin Trinitarians were swept from the field. True, in the days of Justinian the arms of the Belisarius restored the supremacy and the dogmas of the Roman Church; but our religion did not die with the Arian martyrs. It was terribly persecuted, but it took refuge in the Atlas, and still lives. Hast ever heard of Arius, señorita?"

"Never," replied Juanita.

"And I dare say there are hundreds of priests in Spain who never heard of his name; so do not take shame for your ignorance. I will tell you all about him some day, but now it is no time to be preaching a sermon, when I ought to be improving my time with vows and prayers."

The young man drew the graceful, delicate figure of the maiden closer to him.

"Vows, señor; to what saint?"

"Oh, to the last one that I have added to my calendar—to a beautiful Spanish saint."

"Ah," replied Juanita, "I am afraid you are too much of a heretic to worship in good faith at an orthodox shrine."

"Not so," said the Berber; "although an Arian in religion, I am truly a Catholic in love, and my vows to-night are of an amatory character. Will you hear them?" whispered the young man, "dearest Juanita, will you hear them? I vow that I love you—I adore you—I worship you—I—"

"Hush!" exclaimed Juanita, half frightened at the thrill of pleasure that made her nerves vibrate like harp-strings. "Hush! enough of your vows—come to your prayers."

"Oh, my prayers! I will defer them until some more fitting time, except one—one little prayer."

"What is that?" demanded the maiden, as the Berber pressed her slightly resisting form closer to her breast.

"That you will grant me what you refused just now," whispered the young man.

Juanita started back, and with a sudden and rapid motion freed herself from his arms.

"Understand me, señor," exclaimed the young girl, laying her hand upon his arm; "I will give you a kiss willingly—voluntarily, and because I choose to do so; but I will not be wheedled into it, nor forced into it." And Juanita lightly touched her mouth to the Berber's lips, and then bounded back out of his reach.

"*Bueno*, señorita!" exclaimed the Berber; "spiritedly done, and as unlike your coy but warm and yielding countrywomen as an honest man could wish *Bueno!*" And the young man leaned against the battlements, and indulged in a hearty, boyish laugh.

Juanita knew not whether to laugh or cry; on the one hand was the contagious influence in the young man's low but clear and peculiarly ringing tones, on the other was a degree of vexation with him, for the equivocal manner in which he had received her favor, and with herself for granting it.

"I have traveled in your country, senorita. 'Tis but a year since I made a pilgrimage to the former homes of my Vandal and Berber ancestors. I saw much of your countrywomen, and I found but two ways of dealing with them—either to force them or to coax them. But I have learned somethicg new to-night, and if I have a favor to ask of you again, I shall respectfully present a written petition."

"Take care that it is not spurned for its insolence," replied Juanita, with spirit.

"Nay, senorita, be not offended," said the Berber—ad-

vancing, and taking her hand—"I did but jest. But hark ——there is a noise at the door——the kaid has arrived, and it is time to ascend,——all angels go up when their mission is accomplished; yours is finished for to-night; you have laid a coal on the altar, and now you can mount heavenward—trust me, dearest Juanita, the flame shall not die.

"Be sure to tell the rais, Hassan Herach," he continued, "that there is a fitting house to the left of the *Bab el Gharb*, or West gate."

"But do you not go with us into Abdallah's house? Hark! there is Orsolo's voice."

"No," replied the Berber, "it would be unseemly for me to enter a Moorish house over the terrace. Not that Abdallah is any more of a Mohammedan than either of us; but I have an engagement beyond the walls, which I must fulfill ere it be too light, and yon guard will be in the street until sunrise."

"Hark, again," exclaimed Juanita, "there is Orsolo's voice in a louder tone. Oh! if they force the door and find you here!"

"Have no fear, señorita. They will find it difficult to follow me. Do you know that I can fly?"

"Oh! stop not to trifle thus," exclaimed Juanita grasping the Berber's arm; "in a moment they will force the door!"

"I am not trifling, señorita. Ask the Moors, they will tell you that among my other accomplishments I number the art of flying like a bird. I like to encourage the report. The reputation has already served me in place of wings. But if I cannot fly, I can do something very much like it, as I will show you. Do you see that tree?" said the Berber, pointing to a tall dragon-tree with its half-dozen short, stumpy arms radiating from the top, each about five or six feet in length, and as large at the outer end as where they issued from the trunk. "You can barely perceive the outline of it, but to my Berber eye 'tis as plain as in daylight. You shall see how that tree shall open a door for my escape."

So saying the Berber seized the coil of rope that he carried, and, jumping upon the battlement, swung it round his head and launched the noose at the arms of the dragon-tree. The loop caught upon one of the sturdy horizontal limbs, and, pulling upon it, the Berber satisfied himself that it was securely

placed. Fastening the other end around his arm he sprang down upon the terrace, and seized the rope leading up to the turret.

"Mount, señorita," he exclaimed, "mount while I steady the rope for you. They are growing impatient at the door—draw up the cord and detach it from the turret. *Adios, tierno bien mio, adios.*"

As rapidly as she could place her feet in the loops, the young girl sprang up the ladder. As soon as her foot was on the flat roof of the tower, she drew up the cords by which she had ascended, and detaching them from their fastenings, threw them over on the other side upon the terrace.

Isabel was standing on the top round of the short ladder, impatiently awaiting the appearance of her sister. "*Gracias a Dios!*" she exclaimed, "you have come at last. What made you stay so long?"

"Hush!" replied Juanita, turning and throwing herself flat on the turret, with her head over the edge. Directly below her, and almost within reach of her arm, was the dark figure of the Berber standing upon the narrow battlement. A crash was heard at the door, and half a dozen men rushed into the court. At the same instant she saw the figure of the Berber spring from the wall on which he was standing, sweep downward in a course like a pendulum, rise again in a corresponding arch, and land like a bird on the low terrace of an opposite house—dart along it, and throwing himself over the further wall, disappear in the street beyond.

The chant of the mueddin floated upon the morning air. "*A-i-a-e salah! A-i-a-e salah! A-i-a-e ala el felah! A-i-a-e ala el felah! Es salátou hhairoún minn en náoum! Es salátou hhairoún minn en náoum!* Come to prayers! Come to prayers! Come to the temple! Come to the temple! Prayer is better than sleep! Prayer is better than sleep! *La ilahah ila Allah!* There is no other God than God!"

Juanita sprang over the side of the turret, and rejoined her sister and Xaripha on the terrace.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE perplexity of the worthy kaid of the gates was at its height when he learned the events of the night. He was no coward, but he knew the risk of being accused of harboring the sisters—he knew the precarious tenure by which he held the Sultan's favor, and he trembled for the success of his long-cherished plans for leaving the country with his daughter and his gold.

As soon as it was light he set out to visit the rais. He had not far to go. Hassan, excited beyond all possibility of sleep, by love, mingled with anxiety for the safety of the object of his strong, deep passion, had passed a wakeful night. Restless and feverish, he sallied into the street, when, by an irresistible attraction, his feet were directed involuntarily toward the dwelling of the graceful *Andaluza*. It was with difficulty that Abdallah could induce him to turn back to his own house, even upon the assurance that for the time both the maidens were safe.

"But where are they? Tell me where I shall find them," wildly exclaimed the rais, losing for the moment his habitual expression of calm gravity.

"I will tell you nothing," replied Abdallah, "until you come out of the streets. In your own house we can talk without being observed—here each moment is filled with danger."

Upon entering the house, the kaid looked carefully to the fastening of the door, and then drawing Hassan and his brother into an inner room, he told them the story of the unsuccessful attempt of the kaid of the slaves and his new co-adjutor, the renegade Don.

"The maidens shall come here at once," said the rais. "I will bring them openly, and defend them with my life. I will go to the Sultan, and demand that the villains be punished for breaking into a door of mine."

"You will do nothing of the kind," replied Abdallah.

"And who shall prevent me?" fiercely demanded the rais.

"I will," replied the kaid; "your brother; the girls themselves; every consideration of prudence! To do so would be to bring ruin upon all heads—to throw your captives into the hands of their enemies—to lose your own life, perchance—certainly to give your brother into slavery, and utterly destroy *my* only chance of leaving the country. No; you will do no such thing!"

"What, then, shall be done?" demanded the rais.

"Trust to time and the Berber," replied Abdallah.

"Aye, and in the meantime stand exposed to the attacks of the kaid, aided perhaps by this cursed renegade."

"But we must baffle him," replied Abdallah. "We must remove them with all secresy to a new hiding-place. The Berber sends word that there is a fitting house by the Bab el Gharb. I will go and see to it. If we cannot get that, we can some other. Thanks to the ignorant and brutal despotism that weighs upon us, there are empty houses enough to be had almost for the asking. I will hire one, and your captives can be removed to it to-night. If we can get the house indicated by the Berber, they will be close to the gate, which I can open to them at any time when the Berber shall have a party ready to receive them and secure their retreat to the hills. It would be worse than fool-hardiness to attempt to leave the city until the chief of the Beni Mozarg gives the signal."

The advice of the philosophic Abdallah was the best that could be given, and his plans were none the less sound because it was not alone a regard for the interests of the rais and his captives that prompted them. He was anxious to get the sisters out of his house, partly because it was unsafe for them, and because he considered it would be best to follow the indications of the Berber, and partly because it was unsafe for himself. He also urged that the rais should await the movements of the Berber, partly because it was the most prudent course, and partly because it would give him time to close certain money transactions with the Jews; and to prepare himself and daughter to join the rais and his captives in their flight.

"It will not answer, I suppose," inquired Hassan, "for me to pay them a visit at your house to-day?"

To this question the kaid replied by a decided negative. "To-night," he said, "you will come immediately after

El-aaschir, when the streets will be all deserted; give three slight taps at the door, and I will be ready with your captives, closely muffled. It is but a few steps to the Bab el Gharb. I must hurry now to the palace. The Sultan, it is said, is too ill to appear this morning; but still there is no confidence to be placed in the harem reports, and the old tiger may take it into his head to show himself. As soon as I am free, I will seek the house by the gates of the West and engage it."

It was clear that, under the circumstances, no better conclusions could be arrived at. Abdallah departed, and the rais was compelled to await, in concealed anxiety, the passing of the day. His brother was not less anxious, and still more impatient of the confinement and restraint. To Edward the hours seemed like weeks, that separated him from Xaripha. He had not that control of his passions and feelings that marked the character of his brother. The volcanic elements in him were perhaps not more abundant or more fiery, but the crust over the crater was thinner and more liable to rupture.

The impatience of the brothers was somewhat relieved, and the current of their thoughts diverted, by a salute of twelve guns from the palace battery, followed by a great tumult in the streets. There were the shouts of the populace, the sound of musical instruments, and the reports of musketry. The rais stepped out to inquire the cause of the commotion. In a few minutes he returned, and with marks of interest in his manner, desired his brother to come with him, but first to muffle up his face, as if suffering from pain, and to draw the hood of his djellebeah over his head.

Accompanied by Selim, the brothers made a détour through the streets, and took a position near the entrance to the great mosque. In a few minutes the head of a noisy procession debouched into the square. First came two or three hundred mounted men, armed with muskets, which, as rapidly as possible, they loaded with loose powder, turned in from the hand, without wadding, and fired in the air. Behind them advanced a dozen musicians, industriously thumping in very quick time, as many drums, of various sizes. The discord would have been terrible had it not been overwhelmed by the shouts of the ragged crowd who followed them, and in the midst of which rode the tall, gaunt figure of Don Diego de

Orsolo. He was mounted on a large horse, of fine action, and superbly caparisoned. The saddle housings were of red cloth, embroidered with gold thread. The girths and breast-bands were of silk, worked with verses from the Koran. The bridle and head-stall were of plated morocco leather, and glittered with gold and precious stones. Two distinguished Imaums, or expounders of the law, led the prancing barb. The don was clothed in Moorish costume—yellow slippers, legs bare to the knee, the haick of white woollen, and a large turban of fine linen. His countenance was ghastly pale and cadaverous; his cheeks hollow, his eyes sunken, and over all was diffused an expression of rage, remorse and fear, that made him look more like a fiend than a man.

As the procession turned into the open place in front of the mosque the renegade caught sight, through an opening in the houses, of the wooden cross surmounting the hospitium of the Spanish friars. A thrill of mortal terror shot through his heart. He shuddered, trembled—almost fell from his saddle. A vision of eternal punishment burst upon him, and for a few moments it seemed to his bewildered senses as if he were already in the infernal regions, and that the struggling, yelling crowds of upturned faces that surrounded him were the actual legions of the damned.

The renegade glanced at a group of Christian slaves engaged in repairing the guard-house of the *millah*. Anything except life would the don, who at heart was a bigoted Christian, have given to change places with the meanest one of that group. But it was too late. The fatal confession of a belief in Allah and the Prophet had passed his lips; and could the populace suspect even a disposition to recant, he knew that his quivering limbs would soon strew the streets of the city.

He threw an agonized glance over the crowd. It fell upon the figure of the rais. Edward was so closely enveloped in his djellabeah that his features could not be seen, but the resemblance between the brothers was so close that the don doubted not that he saw in the rais the face and figure of his hated rival. Instantly the expression of the renegade's countenance changed from desperate anguish to intense hatred. He would have stopped and indicated the object of his vengeance, but he was swept along by the shouting crowds to the door of the mosque, where, with difficulty, a passage was cleared for him

into the sacred edifice. The active exertions of his friend, the kaid, however, prevailed, and he was at length enabled to pass the portal, from whence he was conducted to a small carpet, such as the Moors use to pray upon, which was placed upon a raised platform, at the side of the *mehreb*, or niche, from which the Imaum directs the prayers, and in full view of the dense audience filling the vast court of the mosque.

The usual confession of faith was recited by the renegade, followed by the invocation *Allahouakibar!* God is great! repeated in a dozen different positions—standing, stooping with hands on the knees, sitting, and prostrate, with knees, hands, nose, and forehead on the ground, intermixed with verses from the Koran, and exclamations of "*Semeo Allahou liman Hamidahhou!* God listens when praise is given to Him," concluding with the prayer, "*Atahaiataul lahi oua salaouatou oua utaiabatou assalamou aaleikia ioha ennebiyou, oua rahmanteul lahi, oua barakatahou assalamou aaleina, oua aala abadou l-lahi assalaheina, aschahadou anna la Illaha ila Allah ouahadahou, oua, aschahadou anna Mouhammedoun abadou oua rassoulouhou.*"

"Vigils are for God; so are prayers and alms. Welfare and peace to thee, O Prophet of God! May the mercy and blessing of God be also upon thee. Welfare and peace to us, and to all the just and virtuous servants of God. I attest that there is no God but the one God, and that Mohammed is his servant and Prophet."

"This bodes fresh mischief," exclaimed Hassan, as the brothers withdrew from the crowd, and returned by the deserted streets to their dwelling. "Did you notice the look that he threw at me?"

"Aye, indeed; it was no loving glance. It may be that he took you for me; and yet it can hardly be. He cannot know that I am alive, and he must have seen you as captain of the corsair."

"I know not that," replied Hasssan. "He may not have thought until the present moment that you are living, but much I mistake if he does not think so now. You forget that he was captured at night, closely confined below deck, and landed at Salee at night. I question whether he has ever seen me before."

"In that case," replied Edward, "he unquestionably mistakes you for me; and what his passion for his cousin might

not prompt, hate and jealousy will drive him to attempt. It is to be hoped that his power may not equal his will."

"I know not," returned the rais, gloomily; "renegades are always in high favor for the first few days after their apostasy, although their position comes to be miserable enough and contemptible enough in the end. But this is an uncommon case; the don is a man of wealth, he was also a freeman; his change of religion, unforced, unsolicited even; the highest offices and honors are within his grasp, and much I fear that he will have power to give us trouble."

"Let us leave the city then, at once," exclaimed Edward.

"To be picked up by the first party of black troops that we encounter; to be followed, in an hour's time, by the kaid of the slaves, or this miscreant Spaniard, and carried off beyond all hope of rescue or redemption. No, beyond the city walls we have no place of refuge except the kassar of Casbin Subah. There alone grows, on the tree of freedom, the fruit of safety. To reach the tree—to pluck the fruit—we must wait the assistance of the Berber. If we can succeed in removing the Gaditanas to-night, without being observed, I trust that we shall yet throw these hounds off our trail, keen as is their scent."

The brothers returned to their lonesome, ill-furnished domicile, where, with nothing to amuse or occupy them but their own thoughts, the remainder of the day passed slowly away. Hassan, from his Moorish training, had acquired something of one of the great Mohammedan virtues—patience and resignation; but for Edward, his Christian education little fitted him to endure the chafing of his ill-schooled spirit—the excitement of his ebbing hopes and fears. He watched the persistent glare of the mid-day heat and light, as it poured perpendicularly into the open patio, until his brain seemed about to take fire. No shadow would show itself; the very miracle of Joshua was being re-enacted for his especial mortification and punishment—the sun stood still in the heavens.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE generous Xaripha was now the hostess of her supposed rival. She had saved her life from the knife of Fatima; and although, as the beams of the morning streamed into the court, the extraordinary beauty of the Spanish maiden was more fully revealed to her, she suffered not the jealous pang that shot through her heart to excite one evil thought affecting the ultimate safety of the Gaditana. As if to assure her own determination, she hastened to interpose the inviolable guarantees of Arabic hospitality, and to break bread and share salt with the maidens.

And well was Xaripha rewarded, when Isabel, noticing her forlorn look, took her by the arm, and leading her to a cushioned seat in the corner of the gallery, resumed the confession that the entrance of the Berber had interrupted.

"Dear Xaripha!" exclaimed the Spanish girl, as she twined her arms around her Moorish friend, "you recollect that I pronounced Fatima's jealousy groundless?"

The cheek of the Moresca grew pale, and then glowed red, as if painted up to the high standard of Moorish fashion. The glance of the tigress flashed for a moment from her dark eyes, and then the long fringe of eyelashes closed over them, and they remained fixed upon the floor.

"Groundless!" repeated Isabel; and then, after a pause, she proceeded to speak of the slight passages of gallantry between her and Edward Carlyle—the passionate admiration for Xaripha that the young man had admitted to his brother—the close resemblance of the brothers—and lastly, with some embarrassment of manner, of her own passion for the rais.

Xaripha's heart beat tumultuously as Isabel proceeded in her tale—the tears came to her eyes, and her lips trembled.

"There is one question that I must ask you," she said, hesitatingly, and placing her hand upon Isabel's arm—"one question, senorita."

"Ask anything you please," replied Isabel, "and I will answer you in truth."

"Tell me, then, where and when did you last see this young Englishman?"

"In his boat, as he pushed off from the shore at the bar of the Guadalete," replied Isabel.

"And your—your—" Xaripha hesitated, and her brow became crimson—"your visitor of last evening—"

"Was the rais Hassan Herach or Henry Carlyle," replied Isabel, smiling.

Xaripha uttered a cry of pleasure and surprise, and threw her arms around Isabel's neck. The next moment, ashamed of her emotion, and doubtful of being able to control it, she sprang to her feet, and dashing, with a look wild with delight, along the latticed gallery, threw herself upon her couch. Here she buried her face in the cushions, and gave vent to her emotions of happiness, as she had before to her feelings of jealousy and despair, in tears.

Suddenly Fatima, unseen by her mistress, put her head in at the door. The negress had followed the fligh of Xaripha along the gallery—had seen her throw herself upon her pillow and now stood listening intently to her stifled sobs. She knew nothing of the conversation between the maidens, and her own conclusions were that the emotions of her beloved mistress could be prompted only by jealousy and despair. As Xaripha raised her head, Fatima withdrew from the doorway and descended to the court.

"Yah! yah!" muttered the old woman, wagging her head from side to side, while an expression of demoniac determination gleamed from her eyes, and puffed out her fat cheeks. "I take good care this time, oh! Xariph asaghira, this daughter of Eblis shall not trouble you any more. Leila Ripha's heart is too soft—I shan't let her know what I going to do—but I guess I take care this time—Yes, yah! yah! I take good care this time."

The remainder of the day Fatima kept out of sight of her mistress. Moody and silent she busied herself with her avocations in the court and among the menials—hardly deigning to look above, or to take any notice of the evidences of interest and sympathy which she might have seen passing between Xaripha and her guests. The feeble mind of the old woman was wholly occupied with one idea—that of disposing of Xaripha's supposed rival; and that she was determined to carry out, even in despite of her mistress'

wishes, looking upon her as a child whose good rather than whose pleasure was to be consulted in the case. On her part Xaripha did not imagine that the attempt of the negress against the life of the Gaditana would be renewed, and when subduing the emotion excited by the explanations of Isabel, her time was too fully occupied with the sisters to heed the mutterings of the old woman, whose wrath waxed fiercer as she heard the tinkle of the guitar from the gallery, and then, alternately, the voices of the Moresca and Gaditana in song.

A pleasant laugh from Xaripha floated through the lattice. The indignation of Fatima fairly bubbled over. To rival her child in love was bad enough, but to come into the house and make her sing and laugh under such circumstances, was something that could never be forgiven. Fatima grasped her knife, but putting it down again with an effort, she contented herself with distorting her face into a series of diversified scowls, and industriously wagging her head.

"Yah! yah!" she exclaimed, "wait a little while. I go sure this time—yah! yah!" and waddling off, the old woman retired to her own den in a further corner of the inner court, where, coiling herself up on a piece of Rabat matting, she brooded over her own and the wrongs of her mistress, and elaborated her plans of revenge.

It was noon when Abdallah, returning, announced to the sisters that it had been decided they should remove that night to the house indicated by the Berber, which, as it had been standing unoccupied for some time, the worthy kaid of the gates had found no difficulty in obtaining possession of. To this arrangement the generous heart of Xaripha was strongly opposed; she insisted upon it that the sisters should remain where they were, and that she and her father should encounter any risk to protect them. Abdallah replied that it was not alone for his own sake that he proposed to take the sisters to another house—it was necessary to *their* safety. Their removal had been advised by the Berber, and approved by the rais. "The kaid of the slaves," he said, "will at once divine their present hiding-place, if he does not know it already; and the only way to baffle him, will be to send the sisters to their new hiding-place before they can be tracked by spies."

Still Xaripha could not be convinced, although she was

forced to yield; which she did at last only to the wishes of Isabel, who announced her determination to abide by the decision of the rais.

"And, Juanita," exclaimed Xaripha, "you, too—have you nothing to say? do you wish to go?"

"I do not wish it, certainly," replied the young girl; "but as Isabel puts her faith in the rais, I don't see why I should not have some confidence in the Berber: and his last words to me were that we should remove as soon as possible to a house near the Bab el Gnarb."

"Let us hope that it will be but for a short time that you are separated," whispered the kaid. "A few days at most, and then may we all meet where the path of safety crosses the road of danger."

Further argument was useless, and Xaripha withdrew with her new friends to the cool and airy alcove at the end of the latticed gallery. There, stretched at ease upon piles of gilt and embroidered morocco cushions, the three maidens passed, in animated conversation, the Summer's afternoon, Xaripha had many inquiries to make respecting the land of her ancestors; and not a little astonished was she to find, that on many points of Spanish history she was far better informed than her guests. She could repeat old ballads that the sisters had never heard. She could describe the bull-fights, and the joustings which signalized the entrance of the great Almanzor into Toledo. She could picture the mosques and palaces of Seville, and Cordova, and Grenada. The sisters could better speak of the present condition of the country. With the bull-fight they were familiar; but, alas!—and Juanita sighed as she said it—the gallant knights and proud chieftains who once, for grace in fair ladies' eyes, entered the arena, had now degenerated into hired picadors and matadores. Of the tournaments nothing remained; of the mosques and palaces, a good deal still stood, but altered or obscured by the heavy and intolerant hand of the Church. Xaripha sighed as the conviction grew upon her, that the Andalusia of her imagination had ceased to exist.

And thus, in pleasant conversation, or in silence full of unexpressed feeling and thought, the day rapidly passed. The same sun that stood still for the ardent and anxious brothers, moved rapidly over the gallery wherein were grouped the maidens. The shadows of balustrade and cornice fell into the

court, and grew longer and longer, and wider and wider. The slender fountain no longer flashed in the sunlight. The sparkle and glitter were gone, but, as if to make up for the loss, the joyous waters rose and danced, and sang, and fell back into the now shaded marble basin, with a more musical a more soul-subduing sound. The lattices of the gallery were thrown open. The rich, full figures of Xaripha and Isabel, supported amid piles of cushions, rested upon the thick tufted carpet. The slighter but not less graceful figure of Juanita reclined against the pilaster of the open arch, from whence she could watch the play of the bubbling water, as it now rose straight and steady, higher and higher, and now sank quivering and waving in the breath of the perfume-laden breeze, that, springing down from the battlements of the terrace, brought with it a degree of freshness indicating its recent arrival from the hills of the Berber.

It was a beautiful picture, that tesselated court, that marble fountain, that open-arched arabesque gallery, and those three maidens in their loveliness, grouped in unconstrained and graceful attitudes within. A beautiful picture, and well worthy the limning of a more expert pen than the one that now scarcely dares to indicate the outline. Had it suited the purposes of our story, or the truth, to have created some striking contrasts of person, character, sentiments, habits, or age—to have exaggerated slight differences, and with a free hand to have heightened the lights and darkened the shadows, the picture would have been much more easily presentable to the reader. A striking picture might not, perhaps, overtask our powers, but one of such quiet, harmonious, uniform loveliness, requires a master hand.

The evening had hardly closed in when a tap was heard at the rude square door opening into the street. Abdallah drew the bolts, admitting three hooded figures into the darkened skeffa. A few words passed between the kaid and the rais, when Abdallah in all haste proceeded to call the sisters. Accompanied by Xaripha, they descended from the gallery and entered the outer court. The rais advanced a few steps, leaving his companions in the background, and addressed in a low tone the sisters. Xaripha started when she heard his voice, but the next instant something in the tone reassured her, and she turned away as if ashamed of her emotion. As she did so, one of the figures behind the rais called her

attention by a gesture. It was enough—though his form was entirely enveloped in the djellabeah, and his features concealed by the hood, there was something that she instantly recognized in the wave of his hand. The figure stepped back into the skeffa. Xaripha obeyed the gesture, and found herself clasped in the arms of Edward Carlyle.

As the young man pressed the yielding form of the Moresca to his breast, a thrill of passion—so wild, so fierce, so maddening—passed through his heart, that for an instant he shuddered with fear.

"I shall go mad!" he muttered, "and then—

"Xaripha," he whispered, making an effort to repress his emotion, and to recover his senses, which seemed about to leave him—"Xaripha—my life! my soul!—I've promised to make no effort to speak to you; see how I keep my word. Oh, you know not what I have suffered since I saw you! And now, in a moment we part!"

"But to meet again," said Xaripha.

"Yes, by Heaven, Xaripha!" exclaimed Edward, fiercely. "Though all the Moors this side of the eternal flames stood in the way, we shall meet again! I will turn Moor myself, but we shall meet again! If needs be, I will renounce family, country, religion—everything! Ah, *mi alma, mi queridito!* you know not how I suffer when I am away from you."

"But this time you will have company to cheer you—the Spanish sisters go with you."

There was lurking in Xaripha's remark a slight feeling of jealousy, but Edward heeded it not.

"No company," he replied, passionately, "can cheer me in your absence. I know not how it is, Xaripha, but I feel toward you as I never thought myself capable of feeling toward woman. Strange! is it not? There is that Spanish maiden—she has mind, and soul, and surpassing beauty of form and face, but could she parch my lips and sere my eyes, make my frame tremble, and my brain whirl, and melt my heart into a red hot glowing mass—now weak and limpid as water, now heavy as lead? Look at her as she stands thus beside my brother. He loves her—truly, deeply loves her; but think you that he feels as I do? No! he has given her his heart; he has surrendered his fancy, and even, perhaps, his judgment; but he at least keeps his senses. But I, Xaripha—what have you left me?"

"All—everything!" replied Xaripha. "What you have given me—what I am—all is yours!"

A passionate embrace was the young man's reply.

Abdallah and the rais, accompanied by the sisters, and followed by Selim, entered the skeffa. Opening the door, and finding that no one was in sight, Abdallah led the party into the street, leaving Xaripha to secure the door. Enjoining silence in a low whisper, the kaid conducted the party through several narrow and crooked streets.

A few paces from the door of the kaid's house, the group passed a figure enveloped in a haick, apparently asleep upon the ground. The sight, however, was too common to excite any suspicion, and the kaid passed on without noticing that, when they had advanced a little distance, the figure sprang to his feet, and kept them in view.

Xaripha fastened the door, and ascended the staircase to the gallery. The next instant Fatima moved rapidly from the inner court, and entering the hall, cautiously opened the door and passed into the street. Her master and his party had not gone so far but that she could distinguish their moving figures, and without hesitation she waddled on in pursuit.

The kaid paused in front of a low, square door, and pulling a wooden key from his girdle, applied it to the lock. As the door closed upon the party, Fatima gave a grunt of satisfaction, and turning, made her way rapidly back to the house. The hooded figure advanced to the door—paused for a moment—noted the neighboring buildings—applied his ear to the keyhole, and then, to mark the house beyond all possibility of mistake, picked up a small piece of stone and deposited it at the base of the wall by the door.

Within, the house was an exact counterpart of a thousand other second-class houses in Mequinez. Long, narrow rooms, lighted only by lofty doors, surrounded an oblong paved space, which was divided into two courts by a wall pierced with arches. Had the house been of two stories, these arches would have supported a gallery. Like many of its kind, it had been for a long time uninhabited, and the rooms were somewhat dilapidated—the tendency to rapid decay, arising from the weakness of the tapia walls, and the enormous weight of the terraces, being a characteristic of all Moorish dwellings.

A mattress of wool, two or three thick rugs, and a pile of cushions, composed the furniture of one of the rooms opening upon the inner court. A corresponding room of the outer court was selected for Edward; and Selim was despatched for the thick Rabat rug that served for his couch. As may be supposed, the maidens were well pleased with the arrangement by which a companion, and in some sort a protector was secured to them. With the young Englishman within call, their situation was such an improvement upon their late solitary residence, that they felt that for a time at least they could make themselves quite content with their lot.

Abdallah and Hassan retired, but soon returned, bearing a provision of fruits, bread and baked meats, sufficient to prevent all necessity for opening the street door for several days. With many cautions against exposing themselves on the terrace to a view from the turrets of the houses, or from the minarets of the mosques, Hassan took a reluctant leave, and withdrew for the night with the kaid.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Of the four or five thousand women, who, in the course of his long reign, were admitted to the honors of Muley Ismael's seraglio, no one ever acquired or maintained the influence over his mind that was enjoyed by Leila Ajakah; and that not by her personal charms, or through the monarch's affections. Other women ministered to his passions, and were then sent to the Tefilet, where the Sultan kept an asylum for his repudiated wives and cast-off mistresses; but Leila Ajakah ever retained her place as *sultana sidana*, or Sultana Queen, in the harem at Mequinez.

She was old, fat, ugly, and a negress, with all the characteristics of her race in form and feature strongly marked. Without education of any kind, she possessed great natural shrewdness, strong passions, indomitable energy, and an ambition that stopped at nothing that could conduce to the preservation of her own power, and the elevation of her son Sidan to the throne.

For many years the chief object of her jealousy had been

a favorite son of Muley Ismael, by a beautiful Georgian slave who had been brought up in the Christian religion. The son partook of his mother's beauty, and soon engrossed so much of his father's affection that he alone had a royal education given him, while the Sultan's other sons were consigned to the most profound ignorance. But it was this partiality of the doting father that occasioned the ruin of the young Mohammed's mother, and ultimately of himself. A false accusation of infidelity was contrived by the Sultana Sidana, and in the first fit of passion, the fair Georgian was ordered by the jealous tyrant to death. Her innocence was established when it was too late, but such was the influence of Leila Ajakah, that the Sultan, instead of punishing the author of the accusation, overlooked the imposition which had been practised upon him, and contented himself with various public demonstrations of regret at his credulity and precipitancy, and renewed manifestations of an increasing fondness for his favorite son.

The continued intrigues of the vindictive and jealous queen convinced the Sultan that the life of his favorite would not be longer safe at court, so giving him a sum, a hundred weight of silver, he dispatched him to Tefilet, with orders to take upon him the superintendance of the imperial seraglio in that town. Here a quarrel soon broke out between Mohammed and another son of the Sultan, named Maimon, who had been appointed governor of the province. A bloody rencontre in the streets of Tefilet was the consequence, and both were ordered to the court in chains. Upon appearing prostrate before him, Muley Ismael addressed them with a scornful smile, and in words that have been literally preserved by the historians of the time:

"Good morning! good morning!" exclaimed the grinning tyrant. "How do you both do? I am heartily glad to see that you are still both alive, and that neither of you hath lost his life in your last bloody engagement. I easily perceive either that you think yourselves to be without a father, or forget that I am he. You appear, indeed, as meek as lambs before me; but out of my sight you are worse than roaring lions. If, while I am still alive, you have the boldness to take up arms against each other, what will you do when I am dead? Let me therefore hear, without disguise, the occasion of this quarrel of yours, that I may apply a speedy remedy to it."

Upon this invitation the brothers arose and pleaded their cause before the Sultan. The testimony of the Sultan's brothers was introduced, by which it was established that Maimom, a profligate and debauched fellow, was in the wrong, and he was sentenced to confinement in the castle of Zezami.

"I obey!" exclaimed Maimom, sulkily. "I care nought for the confinement, but it grieves me that that Christian," pointing to Mohammed, "should get the better of a true believer."

This insulting allusion to the religion of Mohammed's mother occasioned a fresh outbreak, and from words the enraged brothers proceeded to blows. The indignant and passionate father ordered that scimitars should be given them and that they should fight it out on the spot; but at the request of some of the bolder courtiers, he consented to substitute cudgels for swords. The infuriated brothers needed no further encouragement, but seizing the clubs, belabored each other until they were covered with blood.

The Sultan at last ordered them to desist, but Mohammed, without heeding the command, continued the blows whereupon the Sultan, in a rage, seized the cudgel of Maimom and struck Mohammed with it. This was adding fuel to fire, and Mohammed's passion bursting all bounds, he rushed by the Sultan, seized Maimon by the throat, dashed him to the ground, and stamped upon him. Muley Ismael leveled his spear, and was about to pierce his disobedient favorite, but, suddenly checking himself, he merely struck him a slight blow with it, and then bitterly upbraided him with his Christian blood.

"Go!" he exclaimed; "you are no Moor; the blood of the Nazarene speaks in your actions. Depart from my sight. Go, eat swine's flesh with the unbelievers."

'Twas but for a few days, however, that Mohammed remained in disgrace. The tenderness of the father triumphed over the anger of the Sultan, and he was appointed to the government of Montegara, which he administered in quiet for five years.

A sedition having been excited in Soos, the most important and populous province in the whole empire, Mohammed was ordered by his father to go and take upon himself the government. He eagerly accepted the appointment, and so

happily directed were his administrative efforts that the disquieted province was speedily reduced to peace. This new preferment, and the success attending his measures, aroused anew the jealousy of the Sultana Sidana, and numerous intrigues were set on foot for his destruction. Among other devices the Sultana caused a forged letter from the Sultan to be sent to Mohammed, ordering him to put to death a venerable sheik whom the Sultan highly esteemed. He obeyed, and dispatched the same courier back with the news of the sheik's death. The rage of Muley Ismael was heightened by the appearance of the sheik's sons, who came to lay their complaints before him; and Mohammed was ordered to repair with all speed to court. Mohammed obeyed, and upon reaching the palace he found his father awaiting him, surrounded with the sheik's sons, in tears.

"Are you Shereef?" screamed the monarch, in a tone of fury.

In an instant Mohammed divined his danger, and from the presence of the sheik's sons, the cause of the Sultan's wrath.

"Thou knowest whether I am or not," he replied. "I have only executed thy commands, and here they are under thy hand and seal."

The Sultan took the letter, read it, and, without saying a word, mounted his horse, and set out at all speed for the harem. "The days of Leila Ajakah are numbered," thought the courtiers; but they were mistaken; the influence of the old negress survived the tempest of imperial wrath. Upon some specious pretence, she contrived to appease the Sultan's resentment, and he contented himself with distributing money to the orphans, and sending them and his son back to Soos.

Although failing in this attempt, Leila Ajakah continued her intrigues against the life of Mohammed, until at last the young prince was fairly driven into rebellion. He seized a large treasure coming from Soudan, persuaded the imperial guards to follow him, and, retiring to his province of Soos, set up the standard of revolt—sending a letter to his father, reproaching him for the influence that he allowed the Sultana over his mind, and expressing his determination never again to visit a court where he could not rely upon the power of his own father to protect him from the machinations of Leila Ajakah and her brutal son Sidan.

Goaded by the malicious representations of the Sultana into fury, the Sultan was at first disposed to give up a projected expedition against the Algerines, for which he had collected an army of sixty thousand men, and to set out at once against his rebellious favorite. But at length he concluded to delay his vengeance until the Algerine question was settled, which it finally was by the complete rout of his troops by a greatly inferior force. This defeat, however, did not long prevent the collection of a large body of men, who were dispatched against the rebellious prince, under the command of his rival Sidan.

It is not necessary to give the details of the campaign, which, after a variety of good and ill fortune, resulted in the capture of Mohammed, who, as we have mentioned in another chapter, was brought before his father, and, with the most barbarous ceremony and parade, mutilated in such a manner as to cause his death in a few days.

Leila Ajakah rejoiced in the success of her long pursued plans for the elevation of her son Sidan to the throne, but she saw, with some alarm, that her efforts to clear his path had for the time somewhat weakened her influence with the Sultan. She had, however, too much tact to do anything that could further endanger it, and she did not therefore set herself as strongly as she otherwise would have done against a sudden and violent passion which the Sultan conceived for a beautiful Irish girl, who, captured by the corsairs of Algiers, had been sent as a present to him from the Bey. Anxious to preserve her supremacy in the harem, and no longer fearing a rival for her son, she at first looked upon this fancy of the Sultan without jealousy, trusting that, as in hundreds of other cases, it would be short-lived, and that the new favorite would have neither the power nor the will to establish an influence adverse to hers. But when the affection of the Sultan appeared to increase with time, and when the birth of a son to his old age occurred, to rivet his doting passion for the mother; and more especially when the mother, secure of her power over the Sultan, had begun to exhibit a tendency to encourage a rival faction in the harem, the jealousy of Leila Ajakah was aroused, and the destruction of the new favorite was resolved upon. But how to effect it—it would be unsafe to use poison or the knife; for the Sultan, perceiving the symptoms of jealousy, had intimated his intention (in case any violence was

done to his favorite) of strangling every female in the harem. There could be no doubt that he would keep his word. A charge of infidelity had been tried with varying success in too many cases to admit of its being used again. There was no hope except in diverting the affections of the Sultan into a new channel. To do this, it was necessary to find some one with a degree of personal beauty that would attract the Sultan's notice, and strike his fancy—some one with charms surpassing those of the Irish favorite; and this, Leila Ajakah acknowledged to herself, it was almost hopeless to attempt. The perquisitions, however, of the Sultana were pursued with unremitting assiduity, and numberless trials of new faces were made, but without effect; while each day the state of affairs within the harem grew more and more threatening. Open warfare seeemed inevitable, and the Sultana trembled when she thought that the fate to which she had consigned so many of her rivals—confinement in the old Tefilet seraglio on the borders of the desert—might yet be her lot.

It was in this frame of mind that the Sultana, on the day after the events mentioned in the last chapter, seated herself upon a low divan, just within an arched passage opening into a small square court. This court was in no way different from hundreds of others within the precincts of the palace, except, perhaps, that the tessellated pavement was more curiously laid, and the silken hangings of the arches leading to the rooms, of a more costly pattern and workmanship. In the centre of the court, a fountain threw up a slender column of perfumed water.

Leila Ajakah lolled in an indolent attitude upon the broad divan. This apparent *dolce far niente*, however, was belied by an expression of anxiety and thought, that spread itself over her coarse negro features. The day was warm, and the dress of the Sultana corresponded to the weather. It consisted of nothing but a pair of green morocco slippers, and a single loose garment of linen, without sleeves, cut low in the neck, and of somewhat scanty proportions as to length. But as if to make amends for any deficiency of clothing, rings, necklaces, bracelets and anklets, studded with diamonds and rubies, loaded her bare breast and limbs. Several female attendants, still more lightly habited, but all decked with gold and jewels, were around her.

The wicket in the large folding-door leading to the passage

was thrown open, and there waddled in a negress, nearly as large and quite as ugly as the Queen herself. Without ceremony the new comer advanced, bearing a small bundle, which she placed at the feet of the Sultana. Muttering the usual expressions of compliment, she kneeled, and, untying the parcel, displayed several articles of apparel—a fine white haick, a few yards of linen, and two or three little papers of spices and tea.

The present was not of much value, but it was sufficient to comply with the Moorish custom, which requires that an inferior should never seek an interview with a superior empty-handed.

"Yah! yah!" muttered the kneeling negress. "'Tis a small thing to present to the sadina; but I have something to say of more value. Yah! I tell the sadina something she like to hear. Yah! yah!"

The Sultana had watched with a careless glance the movements of the negress, but at her last words she started with an air of interest, and held out her hand.

"Fatima Laboo!" she exclaimed. "My old friend, it would do my eyes good to see you, even if your hands were empty. Did we not cross the desert together?"

"Yah! yah!" exclaimed Fatima. "We cross Sahara together, but then we go different ways. Yah! you make Sultana sidana. I make slave to Abdallah. Yah! yah!

"Yes," replied Leila; "but I do not forget old friends. You have some favor to ask of me; speak boldly."

"No, no; I got no favor to ask; but I got something to tell. Yah! yah! I know what you want — everybody know."

"Fatima leaned forward and whispered in a low tone:

"Sidana want to eat the heart of the Nazarene."

The Sultana distorted her mouth into a hideous grin, but made no reply.

"Yah! Yah!" continued Fatima, wagging her head. "I know the way—sidana shall have it. Look, her heart is in my hand! I put it into sidana's."

The queen made a gesture of silence, and then rising, she took Fatima by the arm, and drew her into a small, dark room. When beyond the reach of the ears of her women, she eagerly demanded an explanation of her words.

With sundry waggings of the head and contortions of the

body, and numerous exclamations of "Yah! yah!" intermingled with adjurations of Allah and Obi, Fatima went on to say that the desire of the Sultana to find some one who could be brought forward as a rival to the present favorite of the Sultan was well known; and that, out of friendship for her old acquaintance, countrywoman and fellow-slave, she had come to announce that such a rival could be found.

"'Tis idle to talk of it." interrupted Leila, fiercely. "Our lord the Sultan hates the beauties of this land. Eblis blinds his eyes, and he can find nothing to please him but among the damsels of the Kaffirs. May the curse of the Prophet light upon them!"

"Yah! yah!—that is it. This one is a Nazarene; and, oh! how beautiful!"

"Christian, do you say?—Of what nation?"

"A Christian and a Spaniard."

"And beautiful?"

"Yah! yah! like the stars—like the moon. She is not very fat now; but you shut her up for a few days, and make her drink plenty milk, and eat plenty cooscoosoo, she grow fat very soon. Yah! yah! She grow fat enough."

A few words sufficed to explain the story of Isabel, so far as Fatima had heard it or could guess it; and so occupied was the old woman's mind with the image of the elder sister, that she quite forgot the existence of Juanita.

The conference between the two friends lasted but a short time. The Sultana was to impatient for action to await the tedious circumlocutions of Fatima; and as soon as she had gathered the main facts in relation to the case, she put her head out of the door, and made a signal to a confidential female slave.

"Call Hadj Hallioud," she exclaimed. "Tell him I must see him instantly."

The slave departed, and in a few moments, in obedience to the summons, Kaid Hadj Hallioud, chief eunuch of the harem, a monstrous negro, almost sinking under the weight of fat that loaded his frame, made his appearance.

In former days Kaid Hallioud and the Sultana had been rival powers in the harem, and long and bitter was the struggle for supremacy. The superior genius of Leila, however, at last triumphed; and the kaid was fain to acknowledge himself vanquished, and to beg for mercy, upon the promise of strict obedience to her will.

"Peace to the Sultana sidana, and may God preserve the life of her lord the Sultan!" exclaimed the kaid, in a broken, wheezing voice, and with a twinkle of his small eyes, half malicious and cunning, and half foolish and stupid. "What is the will of the Sultana? Whose head is too high? Tell me, and I will lower it. Whose neck is too stiff? I have a twisted sash that will bend it. Whose back is too straight? I have a *filela* that will bow it."

There was a good deal of the natural dignity of strong genius and character, and some of that elevation that frequently arises from the exercise of power, in the manner of the Sultana, when her passions were not aroused. She replied to the complimentary proffers of the kaid with a gesture of impatience and a smile of contempt.

Advancing toward him with a grave face, she laid her hand upon his arm. "Have a guard ready to-night, and when it is quite dark, go to the house that stands nearest to the Bab el Gharb. Enter it, and you will find a maiden of the Nazarenes. Bring her here to me. Do you understand me?"

The kaid uttered a sigh of assent.

"On your head be it—I am in earnest—on your head it shall be. And, mark you, be careful of the maiden; bring her hither, but treat her with all tenderness."

The kaid promised implicit obedience, and, with the usual complimentary expressions, departed.

"Yah! yah!" exclaimed Fatima, as she took her leave, and, under the guidance of the slave who had admitted her, wended her way through the labyrinth of courts and passages to the palace gate. "Yah! yah! I guess I put her now where she won't trouble little 'Ripha any more. Oh! Xaripha saghira! I love you much—more than you do yourself. You wouldn't let me kill her, but I do just as well. He no kiss her any more—he come back to little 'Ripha. If he don't—ha! I do something then! Yah! yah! I give him Obi dish—I guess so. Yah! yah!"

CHAPTER XXIV.

It was just as the sun was sinking below the horizon, that a horseman emerged from the lentisch groves covering the sides of a range of small hills forming the eastern boundary of the level and beautiful plain of Mequinez. A djellabeah completely enveloped his person, except that from his knee down, a well-formed muscular leg was, according to the custom of the country, entirely bare. The hood of the djellabeah drawn far over the head, concealed not only the features, but rendered it impossible to tell whether beneath was the closely-cut hair and turban of the Moor, the black skull cap of the Jew, or the long locks of the mountaineer. There was, however, something in the lithe grace with which the rider sat in his saddle; something in the light springy air of his figure, revealing itself in despite of his coarse woolen garment, that, had the reader been present, would have sufficiently indicated the name and character of the stranger.

The horse, too, the reader will readily recognize. He was a tall black barb, but inasmuch as we shall have occasion to dwell upon his points more particularly hereafter, we will not stop to describe him now. With slow and lazy step the animal, left by his rider entirely to himself, made his way among the low palmetto bushes, and entered upon the plain.

The plain, or small prairie, was one of a series, all, evidently, the beds of extinct lakes, which, commencing in El Garb, the most northern province of Morocco, stretch, with various interruptions from the spurs of the great mountain range to the borders of the Sahara. To the north the regularly serrated hills of Marmora were now clearly visible; to the east, as we have said, was the range of low hills from which the horseman had just descended, and peering above them, in the distance, were the lofty snow-covered summits of the far-famed Atlas; while to the south and west the view was uninterrupted until the eye rested upon the minarets and domes of Mequinez.

The sun had now sunk beneath the clear and distant horizon which bounded the plain to the west, relieving the

parched earth from its overpowering influence, and leaving the short but delicious twilight to illuminate the scene. Not a cloud was visible that could receive and reflect the lingering glories of the setting sun, but mantling over the whole face of heaven, a delicious crimson blush mingled itself for a moment with the clear deep blue through which the stars were shining brightly, then fleetingly disappeared. The gray haze of evening began to settle on distant objects, not obscuring, but magnifying and exhibiting their outlines with tenfold distinctness. A solitary fig-tree on the farthest verge of the horizon could be plainly seen, throwing its gnarled and knotted branches in clear relief against the sky.

Suddenly starting from his reverie, the horseman threw back the folds of his djellabeah. Then gathering up the bridle, and affectionately patting the neck of his steed, he exclaimed, "Come, come, good Boroon, we have been loitering long enough; it is getting so dark that no one can observe our haste now, and we have a good long hour's gallop before us. Come! Look out for the lizard holes, and let us be moving, *Ladah el heil! Ladah el heil!*

In an instant the gallant animal, all spirit and animation at the sound of his master's voice, uttering the well-known encouraging cry of the Moorish horsemen, was off at full speed across the level ground, in the direction of the towers and domes we have mentioned, but which were now no longer in sight. No light remained to guide the flying steed; still his pace was not checked; on he sped, passing bushes and gulleys with a celerity and safety betokening marvelous powers of vision in either rider or horse, or, perhaps, in both. For nearly an hour the generous animal was kept, by the encouraging conversation of his master, at the top of his speed.

"Haste! Haste! Child of Hassaneh! son of the beautiful! well done, my brave Boroon," he exclaimed, as his steed cleared a small water gulley. "Bravely done! jewel of my heart. I saw it not; but you—oh, you Boroon, are the light of my eyes. Your sight is as keen as a hawk's. Your feet are the wings of an eagle. What would become of me were I to lose thee, my beauty, my pearl, my love?

"Fly! fly! my brave Boroon," continued the horseman, after a short pause. "'Tis in her service, O son of El Hassaneh, and verily thou shalt have thy reward. Her soft hands shall caress thee—her soft voice shall say, 'Boroon!

good Boroon! brave Boroon!'—her breath shall lie on thy nostrils sweeter than zephyr from the clover fields of Duquela—her form shall press thee, her arm shall guide thee. Yes! I swear it, by all the saints! you shall stretch your legs beneath the light weight of the flower of Andalusia!"

Suddenly drawing rein, the rider checked his horse and sprang from his back beside a fig-tree, which accident had probably planted upon the spot. Looking carefully under and around the tree, he struck a short, sharp blow with the fingers of his right hand in the palm of his left, and waited a few moments for an answer.

"He has not arrived yet," said he, in a tone betraying some little vexation. "We must even wait, good Boroon. I hope that he will not disappoint us entirely."

Thus saying, he took the bridle off his horse and led him a short distance from the tree. Here he threw himself upon the ground behind some furze, and at a word Boroon stretched himself out beside him. Both were thus as completely concealed as they could have been in the tallest thicket. A small bag of dates, shared equally between master and horse, served to occupy the short half hour they had to wait.

Of this brief interval we might avail ourselves, according to the usual privilege of novelists, to spin a chapter out of the crowd of thoughts and sentiments that occupied the young man's mind. But, although the time favors, our space will hardly permit, and we must leave the reader, therefore, to infer the general tenor of the current from a few muttered exclamations.

"By heavens!" he said, "can I but stir up the Shelloohs to open the war, I care not if they will not join their arms to mine—'twill serve for a d version. And, then, if I can rally our Berber tribes—aye, if—Now, curses on these blood feuds! Let me get the upper hand once, and I will crush the jarring and diverse elements of our nationality together with a strong arm. But now!—prudence, caution; settling disputes here, patching up a peace there—tying up a bundle of faggots to-day, that to-morrow will be riven and in a flame! But all could be done if I only had tools to work with. Oh, if I had half a dozen men with the spirit of the Gaditana! How her eyes glowed when I spoke of rescuing this land from the Moors! By heavens—it shall be done! She is worthy of an

empire—and I will offer her one, What a Queen she will make! She must be mine," added the speaker, after a pause. "Yes, even if nothing but the chieftainess of the Beni Mozarg!—Her presence would be worth a century of civilization. But away such thoughts!" he exclaimed, vehemently; "I will not think of failing. Mine is the mission to nationalize the Berber race, and lead them on, through empire, to civilization—and by all the Prophets! she shall aid me—she shall share my success!"

The mutterings of the Berber were cut short by the approach of a person mounted upon an ass, as was evinced by the patter of the animal's hoofs on the sod, and the encouraging rub-a-dub kept up on his ribs by the heels of his rider.

Suddenly stepping from the concealment of the bush, the horseman saluted the new comer with a tap on the shoulder, exclaiming, "You are behind your time, good Yacob."

The person so saluted was enveloped in a large black sulham or gaberdine, which, without the name pronounced by his companion, was sufficient to indicate his Jewish caste.

"Come, don't be frightened, Yacob; there is no one here but ourselves," continued the Berber, as the Jew started at the sudden salutation.

"Holy Father Abraham!" exclaimed Yacob, recovering his breath, "Casbin el Subah! How could you startle me so? You know the risk I run to meet you here, and—"

"True, good Yacob, I should have been more considerate. I should have recollected that you are no lion-killer, and—"

"Nay, accuse me not of cowardice, because, unlike you, I prefer a quiet dish of cooscoosoo to a wild boar hunt, or a fight with a lion single-handed; or because I cannot hear a musket fired in my ear without starting. Here have I, the chief treasurer of the Sultan of Morocco, come to meet my patron at the imminent risk of life. Dost thou suppose that Muley Ismael, if he knew it, would be satisfied with anything less than my head?"

"I did thee wrong, good Yacob, and am sorry for it; but tell me, what news from the city—hast kept thy eye on the kaid of the slaves, as I directed?"

"I have; and much I fear the son of Sheitan has evil in his head."

"I doubt it not; but what is this plan for thwarting and nunishing him that you have to suggest?"

"Have you brought the necklace that I mentioned?" demanded the Jew.

"I have," said the Berber; "here it is;" and he produced a casket containing a string of small pearls.

Yacob took the box in his hand, opened it, and felt the pearls for a moment in silence.

"The same!" he exclaimed. "I could tell it in the darkest night by the clumsy and heavy setting. And you will not begrudge this trinket," demanded Yacob, "to secure the punishment of the kaid?"

"Were it of ten times the value it is, I would give it readily to avoid the necessity of dealing with the kaid myself," said the Berber. "You know, Yacob, the reasons I have for avoiding any tumult just at this moment; otherwise I would carry the worthless hound out of the city by force, and scourge him to death with the *filela* that he is so fond of applying to the backs of the Christians."

"Well, trust me," exclaimed Yacob; "with this necklace I will make him jump into a pit of his own digging. You shall judge of my plan. The kaid, you know, is a saint, and one of the chief titles to the honor is his weekly miracle of journeying to Mecca every Friday; the Sultan affects to believe in the fellow's pretensions; but it would delight Muley Ismael much to catch him in his villainy. Now, I shall show this necklace to the Sultan—it is of too little value to excite his cupidity, but the oddness of the setting will attract his attention—and I shall then suggest that he ask the kaid to bring him a pearl necklace from the Holy City at his next visit. The kaid will come directly to me. He has robbed me many times of things twice their value. I will be prepared for him this time. I shall give him this, and he will present it to the Sultan as the result of his pretended journey. Lucky will the villain be if he escapes having every bone in his body broken on the spot.

"'Tis a plot worthy of your subtle genius," said the Berber. "I cannot say that I approve of it, and yet I will not forbid it. But what if it should fail?"

"Never fear," replied the Jew; "I will answer for its success with my head. I shall see the Sultan this very night, and shall take him an account of the conversion into

coin of the jewels of the Bashaw of Tlemcen—the amount will please him. To-morrow is Friday, and it is during the hours from *Ed-douhour* to *El-assar* that the kaid makes his journey; trust me, before to-morrow's sun set, the kaid will have thrown himself over the wall of the Sultan's favor. Let him cease to be kaid of the slaves, and for a time, at least, he is powerless."

For some time longer patron and client remained talking; but we have given enough of their conversation to indicate the principal object of their consultation, and the only one with which our story has anything directly to do.

"And now, good Yacob, it is time for us to separate. I must away for the tribes of the Beni Gurin; I have received word that an expedition is ready to renew the old feuds with their neighbors of the Yeder. Some paltry, wordy insult!—curses on these miserable jealousies! It will be a hard ride, there and back; but I shall make short work with the revengeful fools—and Boroon is fresh. I shall be in the city to-morrow night. The *millah* will be closed; but if it were not, it would not do for us to be seen in communication: so how shall I know that your scheme has been successful?—But it matters not," continued the Berber, after a pause. "If the imperial frown light on the kaid, the whole city will be filled with the news."

A few more words, and the Jew seized his patron's hand and covered it with kisses. With many expressions of affection, uttered in a tone which indicated that they were not the words of mere compliment, he took his leave, mounting his ass, and set out for the city.

"*Ajee! ajee!* Boroon!" cried the young man; and the black barb sprang up from his couch, where he had quietly awaited the conclusion of the conference, and trotted up to his master.

The young man adjusted the girth, and then, without touching the short stirrups, vaulted lightly into the saddle. "You must fly to-night. my brave Boroon; you must use both eyes and feet! Forward! in the name of God, Boroon, and—and shall I tell you, Boroon?—shall I whisper it to you?—I will. It will put strength in your limbs and courage in your heart. Forward! in her name—in the name of the Andaluza!—in the name of Juanita!"

Like the ground sweep of a raven, Boroon's black flying

form skimmed the parched earth—leaping ravines and gulleys; scattering the dry furze and thistles; or dashing up the pebbles from the parched water-courses.

The loud yelping of packs of dogs rose from the distant douahs; swelled into a furious chorus as the rider approached, and died away again as the hoofs of Boroon no longer challenged their attention. Their frightened masters muttered their prayers the while for preservation from the djin who was thundering by their tents.

CHAPTER XXV.

FRIDAY is the Mohammedan Sabbath. During two or three hours in the middle of the day, when the people repair to the mosques, the gates of the cities are closed. This custom originates, it is said, in some ancient prediction that the country will be attacked by the Christians on Friday, and its cities surprised while the inhabitants are engaged at their devotions. After the religious services, the gates are thrown open, the citizens resume their usual avocations, and there are left no indications that the day is considered especially holy.

Upon the Friday following the interview of patron and client in the last chapter, the Sultan rode in state to the principal mosque, accompanied by all his court. As an especial honor, Don Orsolo was assigned a position next to, and a little in the rear of, the monarch. A negro slave, who had been presented to him by the Sultan, following him, bearing his praying carpet. Don Diego was mounted upon a fine horse, also a present, but which he knew that he would be expected in time to pay for in return presents of three times its value.

The countenance of the renegade bore strong indications of anxiety. His position close to the Sultan's person, and within reach of the imperial scimetar, was well known to be a dangerous one. The monarch was, for the moment, in good humor; at least such were the indications afforded by his dress, which throughout was of white. He was also mounted upon a white horse, and the sign was hailed by the courtiers with many

expressions of pleasure and delight. But notwithstanding no threatening yellow or red appeared in his garments, and the color of his horse promised a quiet and peaceable day, there was no knowing at what instant, or by what cause, the imperial wrath might be aroused—and then woe to the unlucky courtier who might happen to be within reach! a look, a gesture, a breath was enough, frequently, to ensure a terrible death. Another cause of anxiety to the renegade was a doubt as to the purposes of his associate, the kaid of the slaves. He knew that it was to the kaid he was indebted for a position in the Sultan's train; and the suspicion grew strong within him that he had been so placed in order to prevent any interference with the plans for the capture of the sisters. He doubted not that the kaid had already found, or could easily find, some clue to the retreat of the maidens, and he trembled lest, through the treachery of the negro, he should be balked of both love and revenge. Don Diego anxiously scanned the prancing groups of Moors and negroes, but the kaid was nowhere to be seen. His convictions grew in certainty as the absence of the kaid became apparent, and he bitterly cursed the necessity that compelled him to await a permission to retire from the presence of a capricious Sultan.

Upon leaving the mosque, the Sultan, with his train, passed on to a gate which opened into a wide road, separating the negro town, or the quarters of his black troops, from the city. This town occupied an area nearly as large as Mequinez, and was composed of a collection of houses, thatched huts and tents, intermingled in great confusion, and capable of sheltering forty thousand men.

The troops were not all present—some ten thousand of them being scattered throughout the country in small bands, ostensibly to protect the Arabic herdsmen from the mountaineers, but in reality to collect their own pay, in the shape of plunder, from the defenceless douahs. About thirty thousand were in camp, consisting mainly of slaves brought across the desert from Soudan. The remainder were the descendants of negroes who had been introduced into the country in the days of Muley Moloch, who, making a military excursion to Timbuctoo, was the first to organize a corps of black soldiers.

Licentious, savage, reckless—paying themselves mostly by plunder of the people, and consequently detested by the Moors

—these troops formed the chief dependence of the tyrant. His Moorish soldiers he dared not trust; and, although he knew that the blacks felt no particular attachment to his person, yet it was their interest to serve him faithfully, and he felt that he could count upon the instincts of self. Nothing delighted the jealous old tyrant more than to visit the camp; and upon the present occasion he was all complaisance and good nature. He threw himself from his horse; seated himself upon a carpet, at the foot of an aged olive tree, and received with great graciousness the kaids and other officers of the various corps. Two or three hours passed, during which Don Diego was compelled to remain a silent but impatient spectator of the ceremony.

At length the Sultan mounted his horse, and set out on his return. The instant his leg crossed the saddle the expression of his face underwent a sudden change. The old courtiers, who noticed the peculiar sparkle of the imperial eye, and the nervous retraction of the lips, knew that some unfortunate would have to pay, with broken bones at least, for the few hours of good humor in which the Sultan had indulged.

Moodily Muley Ismael moved down the wide lane between the camp and the city, until he arrived at the gate opening through the first line of triple walls then surrounding Mequinez. Here he paused. A battery of artillery commenced firing a salute, and a crowd of people, for the thousandth time that day, took up the shout: "God preserve our lord, the shereef! Long life to the Sultan!"

A man mounted upon a fine barb suddenly spurred up to within a few yards of the Sultan, and checking his steed, sprang from the saddle. Crouching to the ground, he glided forward, and pressed his lips several times in quick succession to the imperial slipper.

"Ha!" exclaimed Muley Ismael. "Kaid Hammed ibn Slowek! fresh from the city of the Prophet, oh! most holy saint?" and a slight sneer curled the corners of the Sultan's mouth.

"May it please my lord," replied the kaid, "the miracle of God—to whom be all praise—has again been performed in my unworthy person. I have been to Mecca."

"And how fares it in the Holy City?" demanded Muley Ismael. "The *Kaaba* still stands as it stood in *El Haram*, when you were there last week?"

"The House of God is as it was in the court of the Temple," replied the kaid, trembling; for there was something portentous in the tones of the Sultan's voice.

"And did you kiss the *Adjun Assouad?*"

"My lips pressed the black stone of the Kaaba," answered the kaid.

"Oh! most holy saint!" exclaimed the Sultan; "well may you bless God—for he blesses thee. Did you drink of the waters of *Zemzem?*"

"The shereef of the well presented the draught with his own hands," said the kaid.

"*La illahha illa Allah!*" exclaimed Muley Ismael, rolling his eyes up in affected devotion. "What a miracle! Here, let my hand touch the lips that have so recently pressed the black stone, and been wetted with the waters of *Zemzem.*"

The kaid seized the Sultan's hand, and kissed it repeatedly.

"Did'st think of what I charged thee?" said Muley Ismael, bending down from his saddle, and speaking in a low voice.

"Is the slave of my lord the shereef dead, that he cann hear?" exclaimed the kaid; "is he worse than a hound, that he should forget the commands of his master? Look, oh, thou descendant of the true Prophet of God—may Sidi ever be as faithfully served!"

The kaid fumbled for a while at his girdle, and producing a small leather box, presented it to the Sultan.

Muley Ismael took the casket and opened it.

"'Tis of but little value," said the trembling kaid, who noticed a peculiar twinkle of the Sultan's eye as it fell upon the string of pearls; "but, by the holy hills of *Shedoud* and *She-she!* it was the best in all Mecca—"

The protestations of the kaid were cut short by a loud laugh from Muley Ismael. Again and again the Sultan looked at the necklace in his hand, and throwing himself backward and forward in the saddle, indulged in very unkingly and un-Mussulman-like fits of laughter. The humor of the monarch spread, and, notwithstanding the usual rigidity of Moorish gravity, a general laugh arose from the train of courtiers, although not one of them knew what he was laughing at.

"Where is Yacob Benoliiel?" demanded the Sultan.

The duties of treasurer to the Sultan, although differing from what the title would import—Muley Ismael acting, in fact, as his own treasurer—required the close attendance of the officer of that name; and it was but a moment when Yacob, bowing and cringing, crept to the Sultan's side.

The Jew was a man of about thirty, with the characteristic features of his race, which, when seen—as is sometimes the case in Barbary—in the young, before oppression and cruelty, and the sordid pursuit of precarious wealth, have debased expression, affords one of the noblest types of human beauty. In the present case there was a certain manliness of expression, which at his age indicated, despite the cringing attitudes of his body, that he had not always been a Jew of the towns. He was clad in a long, black sulham; a small, black skull-cap fitted his head, and in his hand he carried black slippers, which he had pulled off from his feet when called by the Sultan.

"Ha! ha!" laughed Muley Ismael. "Look at this, Yacob: did you ever see it before? Ha! ha!"

It was dangerous to laugh—it was dangerous not to laugh; and Yacob contented himself with a slight chuckle and a steady look at the necklace that tee Sultan held in his hand.

"Hast seen it before?" demanded Muley Ismael.

"May it please my lord the Sultan, I have," said Yacob.

"When and where?" demanded Muley Ismael, in a voice from which all tones of mirth had departed.

"As the life of Sidi is precious, I had it in my hand this morning."

"Well!" exclaimed Muley Ismail; "what became of it?"

"Thy servant the kaid saw it, and afterwards he came to me in great haste, and demanded that I should give it to him. He swore that if I failed, the light of Sidi's eyes should be withdrawn from me; and, as I live but in the smiles of my lord the Sultan, I was forced to comply."

"Mercy! Justice! Oh! Sidi! justice!" exclaimed the kaid, sinking to his knees. "Believe not the Jew—he is a liar! He is trying to throw dust in the eyes of my lord. The curse of the Prophet be on his race! Oh, Sidi! trust him not! Next Friday will prove my truth. The angel Gabriel will aid me, and the biggest pearls from Ormuz shall string a necklace for my lord the shereef."

Muley Ismael said nothing, but slightly raising his hand, his executioners seized the kaid, and tossing him high in the air, let him fall head first to the ground. The kaid's collar bone was fractured, and an arm dislocated; but still he preserved his senses, and notwithstanding the pain he suffered, lay perfectly motionless, as if dead, upon the ground. The executioners stood over him, ready to repeat the operation, and waiting for the signal from the Sultan. Muley Ishmael, however, appeared to be satisfied with the punishment inflicted; and turning away, he glanced around upon the silent crown. His eyes lighted upon Don Diego.

"Kaid Suleiman," exclaimed the Sultan, addressing the don by his new Mohammedan name, "you will step into this man's slippers—you are kaid of the slaves."*

The Sultan waved his hand to the crowd of courtiers and dignitaries, and spurring his horse, dashed in through the gate, accompanied only by his executioners and a few favorite officers of the black troops. He rode rapidly on to the palace, taking no further notice of the deposed kaid than to whisper an order that an officer should visit his house, and secure for the imperial treasury anything of value that might be found.

The slight knowledge of Arabic possessed by the renegade would have scarcely enabled him to comprehend the words of the Sultan, had they not received an instant illustration in the altered manner of the surrounding officials. Congratulations upon his good fortune were showered upon him in Arabic and Spanish, and many rushed forward to kiss his hands and his garments. The don suddenly found himself a man of power, the exact extent of which he was ignorant of, but which he resolved to take immediate measures to ascertain. Accompanied by a crowd of people, he set out for the quarter of the slaves. A dozen ragged renegades surrounded his horse, quarreling with each other for the position of interpreter to the new dignitary, and ever and anon shouting to the populace, "Clear the way for our lord the kaid of the Christians —room for the favorite of Sidi, the shereef!"

The fallen kaid, deserted by all but a few negro soldiers, who still retained some reverence for his sanctity, was assisted to a hut in the camp, where his arm was rudely pulled back

*Again will the author take the liberty of saying that this is no mere invention of an unfortunate novelist, hard pushed for an incident, but an actual and authentic fact.

into place, while the fractured collar bone was left to unite itself as best it could. The kaid, stretched upon the hard ground, had good opportunity for reflection upon the uncertainty of all sublunary things, especially under a despotic government; but the usual philosophic resignation to the orderings of Providence, characterising a faith in El Islam, marked his manner, and he bore the reverse of fortune and the pain of his wounds with a calm patience, that in a Christian land would have been singularly edifying.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE news of the deposition and punishment of the kaid of the slaves spread rapidly throughout the city. It was eagerly canvassed at the corners of the streets and in the numerous little coffee-houses, where were assembled parties of quidnuncs, some playing at chess and draughts, others idly squatted on strips of carpet around the rooms, or on pieces of matting in the open patio, and all waiting the hour when the starlight should permit an indulgence in the fragrant mocha or in tea (the newer and more fashionable beverage, which has since quite superseded the Arabic berry), or in the more exciting pleasure of the haschscheese, while some few, in despite of the commands of the Prophet, were secretly reveling in the anticipations of numerous strong doses of Jew brandy, well spiced with aniseed, or, worse than that, in the eyes of good Mussulmans, a long pull at the *bota* of Spanish wine.

The subject was an unusually interesting one, inasmuch as it involved the questions of the kaid's sanctity, and the truth of the miracle which he pretended was performed each week in his own person on Friday. The general impression seemed to be that the journeys to Mecca were actually performed, but that the kaid was very much to blame for not bringing the Sultan a present of more value. A few there were who energetically opposed this view of the subject; but their arguments and assertions were listened to with distrust. The pretended journey had all the essential claims of anything strange or new upon popular credulity. It was in-

comprehensible—absurd! a violation of all actual knowledge, and supported by no testimony that was worth anything. Now it may be asserted, without fear of denial, that in no Christian community of the present day can any proposition, possessing similar claims to public faith, be started without finding at once defenders and expounders. In fact, it may be asserted that if any ridiculous and absurd proposition or pretension fails to impose upon the credulity of a certain order of minds, it is because it is not absurd and ridiculous enough. Who can wonder, then, that at that period, among the superstitious and ignorant Moors, the pretensions of the deposed saint should be received as truth?

Within and around the open gate where the encounter between the kaid and the Sultan had taken place, was one of these groups, composed of a few lounging guards, half-a-dozen black soldiers from the camp, and a crowd of countrymen and women, who were passing backward and forward; some mounted on asses, some driving the little animals before them, with their bodies half hidden in immense loads of charcoal and firewood.

Among the throng collected to listen to the discussion of the events that had just occurred, was a figure that the reader, having had an opportunity of seeing under his different disguises, would at a glance have recognized as the Berber. He was on foot, Boroon having been left at a little distance without the walls, in charge of a peasant, whose small garden, surrounded by a fence of tall reeds, afforded a secure asylum. Observing the excited crowd, he paused in the arched passageway beneath the gate to learn the news.

Glad of an auditor who had heard nothing of the affair, the garrulous old gate-keeper readily recounted the principal circumstances, which, as he had been present upon the spot he described much more correctly than his hearer would have heard them within the city, where, although but an hour had elapsed, a dozen different versions were flying about. The Berber listened attentively, asked a few questions respecting the appointment of the renegade to the office of kaid of the slaves, and then slouching the hood of his djellabeah a little more over his face, passed on and entered the city.

"This must be looked to," he muttered to himself, "and that quickly. Yacob's manœuvre succeeded admirably with

the negro. So far so well; he is disposed of for a while—and Yacob's position is secure. But as to these Christians, much I fear the deposition of the negro will not serve them This renegade will spare no pains to find them. But he cannot know, as yet, where they are!"

The Berber paused and mused for a moment; then resuming his walk, he turned into the street leading to the quarters of the slaves. At the gate of the guard-house he stopped and looked in. A dozen guards were chatting in the skeffa, and as many more could be seen in the patio beyond. At that hour the sight was unusual—the sun being yet half an hour below the horizon, and the slaves not having returned from their work. The chief duty of the guard being, as we have said, to protect the Christian quarter from the attacks of the populace, rather than to prevent the escape of the slaves.

Casbin el Subah glanced carelessly into the vestibule, raised his hand as if to feel his beard in the Moorish style, and passed on. Slowly one of the guards rose from the floor and sauntered out into the street. As he disappeared from the sight of his companions, he quickened his steps, and in a few minutes overtook the Berber.

"*Amizerg!*" exclaimed the soldier in a low tone.

"*Amekran!*" replied the Berber.

The soldier pressed to the side of Casbin, and glancing around, to make sure that no one was within sight, touched the garments of the chief, and then carried his hand to his eyes and his lips. A few sentences in the Berber language passed between them. Some communication of interest it evidently was, for Casbin started; and suddenly motioning to the soldier to return, he himself turned, and with a rapid step, pursued his way to the house of Abdallah.

As he raised the heavy iron knocker, the door was opened by the kaid himself, to give egress to a man dressed in a coarse black bornoose, aud an old greasy skull-cap of the same color. The Jew (for such the color of his garments, to say nothing of the cringing air and suspicious look, and the striking national features, sufficiently indicated him to be) glanced furtively at the Berber, threw his black slippers that he carried in his hand upon the ground, thrust his naked feet into them, and shuffled off in apparent haste and fear of observation.

Casbin stepped within the skeffa, and Abdalla closed the door. The kaid was too much of a gentleman to indicate, by word or look, either curiosity or surprise. To the usual composed and self-possessed substratum of good manners, common to the Moor of almost every degree, he added the polish of the traveled and educated cosmopolite. With the usual expressions of welcome and a courteous gesture, he invited his guest into the *patio*.

"May your politeness never be abused," replied Casbin; "but I need not enter further. I have but a few words to say. I have this moment learned that imminent danger again threatens the Nazarite maidens."

"So far from it," replies Abdallah, "their chief enemy Hammed ben Slowek, has been put beyond the power of harming them by the Sultan himself. He made his journey to Mecca to-day; but, praise be to God! the son of a burnt grandfather brought back a skin full of broken bones."

"I heard the news as I entered the gates," replied Casbin; "but if one plotter of evil has been put out of the way, another has taken his place."

"Kaid Suleiman, the renegade?"

"Don Diego de Orsolo that was—the cousin of the sisters—the lover of the eldest, and their bitterest foe."

"True—I have learned as much from my child, Xaripha; from the rais and his brother; and from the maidens themselves. But this renegade!—may the mercies of the Inquisition some day fall upon him—this Kaid Suleiman!—he can as yet know nothing of their retreat!"

"It will not do to trust to his ignorance," interposed the Berber. "I know that he fancies he has a clue, and he is not the man to let the thread break in his hands. He has received some communication of interest, and he has ordered that a detachment of his guards shall hold themselves in readiness for service to-night. I know not," continued the Berber, "that the movement refers to the maidens, but it looks very much like it. At any rate, you must apprise the rais, and we must hold ourselves in readiness to—"

"Change their residence again?" demanded Abdallah. "It seems that we shall not gain much by that, if their hiding-place is to be so easily discovered."

"No!" answered the Berber, musingly; "not to change their residence, but to leave the city."

"Will it be safe to do so? Can you secure their retreat to the hills?" asked the kaid.

"I think it can be done without danger," replied the Berber. "The Sultan has issued orders for a general review on the plain of Sakel, to terminate with the *lab el barode* and a feast at night. You know how fond of the 'powder play' the troops are. That and the feast will bring in all the bands that are now occupying the country between us and the hills. By making a détour from the North gate, I think that we shall be able to reach the great ravine of Habab without encountering any enemies.

"'Tis different from my original design," he continued, "which was to collect force enough to drive the blacks into the city by a sudden and rapid attack, and to receive the maidens the moment they left the gates. But to do that requires time, and if this new kaid has any knowledge of their hiding-place we have no time to spare."

"The lab el barode favors us," replied Abdallah. "Besides the journey cannot be so dangerous. Do you not pass back and forth from the mountains without difficulty?"

"You forget," said the Berber. "I am a mounted djin. A million of men could not make a barrier that Boroon and I alone could not pass; but with a party badly mounted, and females too, it would be quite another thing. But as you say, the lab el barode will help us, and a bold push for safety is better than for them to remain longer in the city. Art sure that the day after to-morrow is the appointed time for the 'powder burning?'"

"I heard the order fall from the Sultan's lips," replied Abdallah.

"You will give us a pass for the gates?" asked Casbin.

"It will not be needed," said Abdallah.

"How so?" demanded the Berber. "The guard will not open the gates at night, without some warrant for it, and it will be difficult to pass the maidens over the walls."

"I shall go with you," replied the kaid, "and I will take it upon myself to see that there is no difficulty about the gates. 'Tis the last order I shall give respecting them, and no fear but that it will be obeyed."

"Ah!" exclaimed the Berber, "that is fortunate, indeed. I supposed that you were hardly prepared to set out so soon; but if you are ready, you need not hesitate in an open exer-

cise of your authority as kaid of the gates. You will apprise the rais of our plans?"

"At once—and I will also proceed to make such preparations for traveling as the character of our party will require. I will order horses and mules to be in readiness outside the gate."

The details of the plan were few and simple, and when settled the Berber took his leave. Abdallah lingered for a moment to give his orders to Xaripha and Fatima, and then sallied into the street.

The worthy kaid was well pleased with the turn that affairs had taken. His anxiety to get away from the city had been increased very much within a day or two by several courteous salutations from the Sultan. Muley Ismael had even condescended to proffer, with one of his mildest grins, the palm of his hand to the kaid to kiss. Abdallah was a brave man, but he thought of Xaripha, and trembled. He knew that the tiger was crouching for a spring, and with desperate energy hastened his preparations for flight. The Jew, who left his door as the Berber entered, was the agent through whom he had as last succeeded in converting the bulk of his property into bills of exchange upon Marseilles and Leghorn; an operation, under the peculiar circumstances of the case, of extreme difficulty and danger. He was now free to go, and nothing could come more opportunely than the proposition of the Berber to start that night.

With a buoyant step he visited the northern gate to see that it was in charge of an officer who knew his person and office. He then went to his stables, and selecting the requisite number of the finest horses and mules, despatched them in charge of a groom, with orders to pass the gate before it was closed for the night, and to halt at the dilapidated sanctorium of Sidi Hali, a famous saint of the olden time.

The lingering rays of twilight tinted a few light fleecy clouds with crimson, and lighted np the gilding of the domes and minarets as the kaid sought the house of the rais.

It was with no ordinary feelings of satisfaction that Hassan listened to the communication of the kaid. Shut up within the walls of a strange city—hampered in his movements by the necessity of caution—and powerless himself in view of the several evil influences at work around him, he longed to get away to some place, where, if there was still something to fear,

there would be at least greater freedom of action. His sense of the dangers threatening the sisters was very much heightened by the almost complete inactivity to which, by his position, he was doomed. He felt that he could do but little to unravel or to counteract the plots that his and their enemies were weaving. He could not watch over them as he wished, for until the streets had become silent at night he dared not show himself in the neighborhood of their dwelling. He dared not trust himself again at court. He had escaped once, but he knew the risk of attracting the royal attention too strongly to himself or his protégés. Having been brought up mostly at sea, he felt out of his element in the streets of a city and the purlieus of a court. His joy was unbounded, although subdued in its expression, when the kaid informed him that the Berber advised their departure that night. His confidence in the judgment and resources of the young chief of the Beni Mozarg was unlimited, and his eye flashed and his cheek glowed at the thought of once more seeing Isabel, under circumstances which, if not devoid of danger, would at least make his devotion of some service in her defence.

"Think you," he demanded, "that this renegade has discovered the house?"

"I know not," replied Abdallah. "The Berber did not detail fully the grounds of his suspicion. But even if he has discovered it, he will hardly attempt an arrest before midnight, and by that time we shall be away, Recollect," continued Abdallah, pulling from within the folds of his sash a large French watch, "in three hours you will stop for me, and together we will go for the maidens; they will need no preparation for their flight; and, besides, the Berber, I presume, will apprise them; so that it will be, perhaps, as well for you not to venture out until the time for action arrives."

Abdallah took his leave and the rais remained pacing with calm and deliberate step, but with inward impatience and anxiety, the darkened court. An hour passed—the anxiety of the rais increased. The apprehensions of the lover became more and more excited the longer his thoughts dwelt upon the beauty of Isabel, the passion of Don Diego, and the suspicions of the Berber. A conviction came over him that his energetic and now powerful enemy would not wait till midnight to clutch such a prize.

The young man was right; but he little dreamed of a more imminent danger than even the revenge of the renegade, that, alas! thanks to the stupid jealousy of Fatima, was at that moment impending over his beloved.

CHAPTER XXVII.

We need not dwell upon the feelings of Don Orsolo upon finding himself so suddenly appointed to the office of kaid of the Christians. He was too much of a Spaniard, and, despite his apostacy, too much of a Christian to really value, for its own sake, any dignity in the power of the Moorish Sultan to bestow; but he could hardly conceal the feelings of satisfaction with which he saw his treacherous friend Hammed removed from his path, and himself endowed with the power to gratify the two strongest passions of his nature—love and revenge. He knew not the retreat of the sisters, but he was convinced that they were still in the city, and he doubted not that, with the whole force of his department at his command, he should be able in a day or two to find some clew to their place of concealment.

Fortune favored him beyond his expectations. Riding rapidly to the guard-house of the Christian quarter, he dismounted, and took possession of the principal saloon. For two or three hours he was busied in receiving the congratulations of the officers of the guard, and of numerous dignitaries who, with the instinct of the courtly sycophant, flocked to offer their homage to the latest favorite of royalty. The don soon tired of the repetition of the same fulsome compliments. He longed to be alone, that he might take counsel with his own mind as to the course he should pursue. The happy thought occurred to him of proposing a feast in the court, and inviting all to join in it as soon as the signals from the minarets should permit. Issuing orders for a sufficient quantity of cooscoosoo, he abruptly dismissed his hungry guests, who, in view of the liberality of the new kaid, reluctantly consented to leave him for a while to himself.

Slowly the renegade paced the tesselated floor of the long

and narrow saloon. The rays of the setting sun fell more and more obliquely into the court; the shadows deepened within the arches of the folding-doors. The gloom of night gathered in the recesses of the vaulted room; the gloom of a still deeper night gathered in the recesses of the renegade's heart. A vision of eternal punishment rose before him—the maledictions of the church rang in his ears—a feeling of despair and remorse made his flesh creep and his hair to stand on end.

"And she—she," he exclaimed, clutching his hand and grinding his teeth, while the perspiration oozed in large drops from his brow, "is the cause of it all! She drove me after that cursed gallant! she sent me a slave among these barbarians! she compelled me to renounce my God! But my revenge shall come. The Englishman—pah! I hardly hate him. He shall feel the point of my dagger—but I hardly hate him. I could almost feel it in my heart to let him go; but she! by all the fiends, she shall go down to hell with me."

The don struck his clenched hand against his brow, and uttered a low groan of rage and anguish.

A black slave glided into the court, and stood in the doorway. The renegade turned fiercely towards the intruder.

"May God preserve my lord," said the black; "I have news for the kaid of the Christians."

"*Sere, sere!* off—away with you!" shouted the renegade.

The black shrunk back; paused for a moment, and then said, hesitatingly, in broken Spanish, "I have news of the Christian women to give my lord; but it may be that my lord cares not to know of them as did kaid Hammed."

"What Christian women?" demanded Orsolo, and suddenly seizing the astonished black, he dragged him into the darkened saloon.

"What women? Speak, speak, I say?" And the renegade, in his excitement, grasped the black by the breast of his djellabeah, and gave him two or three vigorous shakes.

The first idea that comes into the head of a Moor when a little frightened, is that of a djin or evil spirit, and this idea now prevented the man from replying on the instant. At last, however, he recovered his voice, and with much trepidation, proceeded to inform the renegade that kaid Hammed had placed him the night before, as a spy, in the neighborhood of

Abdallah's house. That he had been directed to watch for two Christian slaves, who, it was suspected, were concealed in the house of the kaid of the gates; that while at his post he had seen a party composed of three men and two women come out of the kaid's house; and that he had traced them to a house near the Bab el Gharb.

"But how know you that they were Christians?" demanded Don Diego, in a voice husky with excitement.

"I know by their gait and their figures. They brushed my face as I lay in the street; one of them had a lighter foot than the other, but neither of them had the heavy tread of our Moorish women. I doubt not that the tallest one, had I been asleep, could have tripped along upon my body, from my heels to my head, without waking me."

"And the three men?" demanded Orsolo.

"One of them remained with the women—the others came out and returned to the house of the kaid."

There was not a doubt in Don Diego's mind that the women were the sisters, and he resolved that he would enter the house by force if necessary, and seize them in virtue of his office, as kaid of the Christians. He was for setting out instantly, but just at that moment there came from the outer court a hum of voices, and an odor of bubbling flesh-pots, which convinced him that he should be obliged to wait until the long day's fast had been properly broken by the evening's feast.

"You can point out this house?" he demanded.

"As easily as point out the Bab el Gharb itself."

"Why is it, then, that you failed to do so to kaid Hammed?"

"Because last night I could not find him, and to-day he has been absent on his journey to Mecca. He is kaid of the slaves no longer, and I thought it my duty to bring my information to my lord. Kaid Hammed would, I doubt not, still give me the promised reward, but—"

"You shall lose nothing," said Don Diego, cutting short the fellow's protestations. "If your information prove true, trust me you could not have brought it to a better market. Go tell kaid Boufra to have a dozen men ready to accompany us as soon as their stomachs are filled."

The black departed to give the order to the lieutenant of the guard, and Orsolo resumed his walk and his self-com-

munings, but in a somewhat different spirit to that which actuated him before the entrance of the Moor. The tinge of remorse had disappeared; despair was for the time banished: the close contact of the actual and the present deadened the sense of the possible and the future; nothing remained but stern resolve, and deep, desperate, deadly revenge—a revenge which was to include not only Isabel and her former admirer Edward, but also her sister, the spirited Juanita. Her image rose to the mind of the renegade, and with it an emotion of astonishment that he could so hate her—but hate her he did, although he did not like to admit, even to himself, that it was in return for the contempt with which he felt that the young girl had ever beheld him.

The Moor gave the Don's order to Kaid Boufra; and the first dozen men who had begun to give the usual disgusting signs of repletion (characterizing a meal in Morocco even among the highest and most polished dignitaries of the land) were assembled in readiness to follow the chief. And here it may be permitted to remark upon what will strike readers forming their ideas of military etiquette and ceremony from Christian troops—the absence of anything like regular discipline or deference. In a Moorish corps, where the soldier of to-day may be the commander-in-chief of to-morrow, there is a degree of social equality which would be, in Christian ranks, subversive of all authority; an officer may have power to order, and to enforce his orders, but that is no reason why he should refuse to dip his hand into the same pot with the meanest of his command.

As soon as the men were ready, the impatient renegade placed himself at their head, and, guided by the black, set out in the direction of the Bab el Gharb. We will leave him to pursue his course, while we return for a moment to the rais.

As the shades of night darkened around the impatient rover his anxiety increased. The conviction grew stronger and stronger, that the renegade would not wait until midnight to carry his designs into execution. This feeling at length became so powerful that he could no longer rest in the house. Summoning Selim, he directed him to go to the fondac, where the crew of the corsair were lodged, and having collected half a dozen of the most trusty men, to follow him as quietly as possible to the Bab el Gharb.

The rais rapidly pursued his course to the point he had indicated to his followers. As he passed Abdallah's door he paused, half inclined to stop and speak to the kaid, but it wanted yet an hour to the appointed time, and Hassan was somewhat ashamed of the feelings which had prompted him to sally forth in despite of his friend's injunction to remain quiet until the hour for action.

The rais passed on, and entered the street where stood the house to which the sisters had been consigned. The street was narrow, not more than ten feet in width; short, and closed at one end. As he came in sight of the house where his brother and the sisters were concealed, he was startled by the appearance of a party of men gathered around the door. He sprang forward without an instant's hesitation, but just as he reached the spot the door was forced in, apparently without much effort, and the leaders of the party rushed into the skeffa leading into the court. Dashing aside, with vigorous arm, those in the rear, Hassan also sprang into the narrow vestibule. Don Diego was on the threshold of the court, when he was suddenly seized with a grasp of iron, and thrown back into the arms of some of his men, while the excited rais, passing him with a bound, wheeled, and, drawing his scimitar, confronted the astonished renegade. The flash of his sabre, as it swung in the faint light of the court, was sufficient to reveal the nature of the obstacle barring their further passage; but there was not light enough to exhibit the features of the intruder who had thus violently thrust himself into, and ahead of, their party.

There was a pause for a moment, when suddenly a couple of torches, with which some of the guard had been provided, flared up in the vestibule, and threw their light into the court.

The renegade thought that he saw the figure of his hated rival, Edward Carlyle, before him. He was no coward when his blood was up, and not an unskilful swordsman; and springing forward with a shout of rage, he made a sudden and desperate lunge at the breast of his adversary. The thrust was skilfully parried, and instantly returned; a few passes were rapidly interchanged, when the don threw up his arms and staggered backward, with the blood spouting from a wound in his breast.

The whole had passed so rapidly, that the soldiers of the guard had no time to interfere. Not a word was spoken,

and for a moment they remained behind their leader, as if paralyzed by the sudden flash and clash of steel.

Don Diego, although desperately wounded, was determined not to be balked of his revenge. "Seize him! Cut him down! A hundred ducats if you kill him on the spot!"

Luckily, the voice of the renegade was beginning to fail him, and besides, he spoke in Spanish, and his orders were understood but by a few.

"Come on!" shouted the rais, in Arabic; "all of you! Come on; I defy you! Let me see the first—aye, the first dozen of ye—that dares to cross the sword of Hassan Herach!"

At the mention of the renowned name of the rover, there was a decided movement among the group of swarthy-faced guards crowding the skeffa, indicating a disposition to draw back rather than to advance.

"Shoot him down!" exclaimed the renegade. "He is no Moor—he is a Kaffir—a dog of an Englishman! A thousand ducats to whoever will kill the unbeliever!"

Overcome with passion and loss of blood, the Don sank speechless from the arms of the black to the ground. His offer of a thousand ducats, however, made some little stir among the guards, and two or three in the background leveled their long guns over the heads of those in front. Their movements were cut short by a commotion at the street door, and by the appearance of a crowd of new comers in the vestibule.

The quick eye of the rais recognized the familiar faces of his crew as they crowded into the skeffa, and stretched their necks to overlook the heads of the guards.

"Ha! welcome, my boys! You are in time!" exclaimed the rais, "Close up! close up! Drive the fellows in! Secure the door there! Let not one escape! And now, dogs! who have howled in the leash of this renegade," continued Hassan, addressing the guards, "down with your arms."

The frightened soldiers obeyed, and in obedience to a gesture of the rais delivered their arms, even to their knives and daggers, into the hands of Selim, and then quietly squatted together in one corner of the court.

The rais had now leisure to look around, and was at once struck with the fact that not a sign could be perceived of

any of the three inhabitants of the house. The rooms were all open and empty. The gallery was vacant—the terrace deserted.

Satisfying himself that the maidens were gone, he returned to the court, where Don Diego was still lying insensible. The rais directed some water to be sprinkled on the face of the renegade, and a draught to be applied to his lips. The wounded man drank, and consciousness returned. He opened his eyes, but the clear flash of passion had passed from them, and in its place were the first shadings of the haze that curtains to the retreating soul the windows through which it has been wont to look upon the world.

The renegade listened with interest to the intimation that the sisters were not to be found; and his earnest denial of any knowledge of their fate carried a conviction of its truth at once to the mind of the rais.

The impassioned rover was puzzled. A thousand varying apprehensions of evil rushed upon his mind; while there was but one hope, and that was that his brother had by some means secured an intimation of the kaid's intended visit, and that he and the maidens had sought a refuge in the house of the kaid of the gates.

Hassan, anxious to ascertain at once whether this hope was well or ill-founded, made a movement for the street, but his step was arrested by a gesture and an imploring look from the renegade. Hassan returned, and again knelt by the side of the wounded man, who, after a slight shudder and a pause, during which he seemed to be mastering some internal emotion, signed to the black to draw aside.

"You are a Christian, although not of my Church," whispered the don.

"You mistake me," replied Hassan. "You are thinking of Edward Carlyle. He resembles me, but I am not he. Me you have never seen before."

"You mock me," exclaimed the don. But there was something so calm and truthful in the young man's look, that Don Diego could not but be convinced—an expression of intense anguish passed over his features.

"Oh! if you are not he—the man I have most hated," said Orsolo, in a tone of agonized inquiry, "then you are—you must be a Moor!"

"I have been bred a Moor; but still I am no blind bigot

of El Islam. If you have anything to say, you can speak to me as if I were a Christian."

"I would see one of the fathers of the Spanish convent," whispered the dying man.

Hassan started and hesitated. "'Twill be dangerous for both," he said. "Know you not the jealousy of the Moors, and the terrible vengeance they take upon a renegade who recants his profession of Mohammedanism?"

"I know—I know," impatiently exclaimed the don, "but I am dying; I feel that I am dying—and by your hand! You will not refuse to aid me? I must see a priest—quick, or it will be too late."

The mental agony of the wounded man was expressed in every feature. Hassan hastened to assure him that he would do all in his power to secure him what he desired, but reminded him that jealous eyes were upon him, and that he must give no signs of a wish to recant.

"It is rather a bad wound," he exclaimed in Arabic, and in a loud tone, so that all could hear; I will go and find one of the Christian doctors of the Spanish hospitium—perhaps he can do something for it."

Before setting out, he directed the wounded man to be be carried into a room of the inner court, and placed upon the couch of the sisters. The Moorish guard were shut up in one of the rooms of the outer court, the door firmly secured, and a sentry seated cross-legged in front of it; and the crew of the corsair brought within the court, so as not to attract attention from the street.

It wanted but half an hour to his appointment with Abdallah, and besides, the anxiety of Hassan to find some clew to the mysterious disappearance of the sisters increased each moment, as the excitement of the recent affray died away. But the agonized and imploring look of the renegade would not permit him to hesitate as to his course. With a rapid step he traversed the irregular streets, and knocked at the heavily-barred and bolted door of the Spanish convent. It took him some little time to procure admission, and to make the object of his visit known.

The service invoked was one of great danger, the Moors being exceedingly jealous of any communication between the fathers and any of their renegades; but the worthy brotherhood did not hesitate, and one of their number was at once

deputed to accompany the rais. Brother Leva was the youngest and most active of the small band of the hospitium; but although his coarse tunic of grey cloth was tucked up and girded with a stout hempen cord, and a long staff assisted his steps, he had great difficulty in keeping pace with the rapid stride of his impatient conductor.

Hassan led the priest into the further court, and thence into the room where the wounded man lay. A few moments' scrutiny satisfied the priest that the wound was necessarily mortal. He shook his head despondingly. Don Diego raised his eyes to the face of the rais with an imploring look, which the latter readily interpreted into a request to be left alone with the priest. Hassan withdrew and closed the door, and calling his second in command, charged him to permit no man to enter the inner court; to give free egress to the priest when he should have finished dressing the wound, and to keep the guard closely confined until further orders. The rais knew his men, and that however much they might suspect that the medication of the monk was being addressed rather to the spiritual than the bodily wounds of the renegade, they would not dare to disobey his orders. Any other than the crew of the corsair would have been more difficult to manage, and priest and penitent would alike have risked the cross or the stake. The time appointed by Abdallah had arrived, and as he could do nothing further for the wounded man, the rais, taking Selim with him, set out for the house of the kaid of the gates.

It was some half-hour after his departure that the monk issued from the room into the inner court, and with stealthy step and furtive glance, advanced to the arched passage-way, where were seated several of the crew of the corsair. One of them touched his skirts.

"How is kaid Suleiman?" demanded the sailor; "can you heal his wound?"

"The kaid's wound is beyond the skill of man," replied the monk. "He has finished his course."

"Dead!" exclaimed the man. "But what else could you expect? Our rais' arm is not a woman's, and he is a fool who thinks to cross swords with him and live. The kaid died a true believer?"

"A true believer;" and fearful of being questioned further,

the monk pulled his cowl over his face, and shuffled in all haste across the court into the street.

As he pursued his way to the convent, the worthy priest muttered a prayer for the repose of his penitent's soul, and blessed the mercy of God that had put it in his power to assure the repentant apostate of forgiveness in Heaven.

Masses were chanted by the brotherhood in the little chapel of the hospitium for the same purpose; but Christian burial was denied, the monks not daring to propose that the body should be laid in the ground consecrated to the burial of Christian slaves.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

SLOWLY the Berber sauntered through the streets, apparently without an object, and with the hood of his djellabeah drawn so far over his face as to conceal the keen glances with which he noted the passers-by. Two or three times he stopped, and, exchanging a word or two with men who, like himself, had their features partially concealed by their hoods, or by the fluttering ends of their ragged turbans, again moved on slowly and listlessly, as before. In no instance did any of these people address him first; but it was noticeable that the instant he spoke they were all attention, and that a certain degree of deference never failed to mingle itself with an air of assumed indifference. It was evident that the Berber had numerous emissaries in the city, and even within the precincts of the palace—a precaution rendered necessary by his own position and the faithlessness of the enemy with whom he had to deal. Possessing a stronghold that was perfectly impregnabte, there was, nevertheless, a portion of his territories that could be defended with difficulty against a large force, and it was essential to be apprised in time of any movements of the Sultan's court and camp, that his people might be able to gather their flocks and herds, and retreat to a place of safety. In this manner the rapacity of Muley Ismael had been several times foiled. A small body of troops could not make an attack upon the wary and warlike Beni Mozarg with any hope of

success; and each time that a larger force had been put in motion, although every effort had been made to conceal its destination, and to allay the suspicions of the Berber chief by assurances of the most profound esteem and friendship, the Sultan had found his treachery had by some means got wind, and that his prey had escaped. If an organized system of espionage was necessary to the safety of his tribe, it was still more so to the success of his grand scheme for the union of all the tribes of the Atlas, and the final overthrow of Moorish rule in Morocco; and Casbin Subah had succeeded in making friends at court, and in so placing his emissaries, that not a plot, intrigue or movement of any importance could escape him.

Upon the present occasion nothing of any consequence seemed to be communicated to him by the persons to whom he spoke, and he sauntered on until he came to the shop of a baker. The entrance was open, and around it, within and without, were squatted a number of female slaves, and a dozen or two of ragged children. The baker, a fat fellow with bare legs and arms, and a little red skull-cap on his head, was seated in front of his oven, with his feet in a shallow pit, industriously putting in and taking out the loaves of wheaten bread which had been brought by the clamorous group around the door.

"My bread! my bread!" shouted one. "How long will you keep me here, oh! thou master of a cold oven?"

"My bread! my bread!" cried another. "Do you wish that my mistress should starve? See, the sun has just gone to bed, or I would take the bread away, and bake it on warm stone, sooner—"

"My bread! my bread!" chorused a number of voices. "Haste there, oh! thou son of the hills, where the bakers all heat their ovens with snow. Ha! ha! the Berber thinks one donkey load of brushwood enough for all the ovens in Mequinez! May the place that you will go to, when you die, be no hotter than your oven; and that is a better fate than you deserve. Hark! *El-assar* will be sounded before this hater of heat—this fire despiser—give us our bread!"

A loud clapping of hands, with peals of laughter and a clucking sound of the tongue, accompanied each abusive sally. The badgered baker retorted in kind. Glowing with heat

and rage, he tossed the steaming loaves to their noisy owners with many a loud-voiced objurgation.

"*Sere! sere!*" he shouted to each in turn. "Away with you! In the name of Sheitan and all his imps, away with you! And may the bread turn in your stomachs to red-hot bricks!"

The cursings of the baker and the chatterings of the slaves were hushed by the sudden appearance of the chieftain of the Beni Mozarg in the doorway. The young man entered, and making a slight sign to the baker, quietly took a seat in one corner of the low, unpaved, dingy apartment.

In a few minutes the baker had distributed the contents of his oven to his clamorous customers, when, looking carefully out, to see that no one remained within hearing, he advanced to the Berber and threw himself at his feet. The chieftain raised himself up, and extended his hand to the kneeling baker.

"Enough, Ishmael," he exclaimed, "I need no assurances of your loyalty. The business prospers, does it not?"

"With the blessing of God and the favor of my lord, it does. I am picking up a few *fluces*, but I long for the day when I shall go back to the hills."

"Be in no hurry, Ishmael; gather wealth, for you know what the Moors say, 'wealth is worth;' besides, I have need of your services here. But, Ishmael, to the business that brings me to speak with you. The troops are to have a review and 'powder burning' to-morrow?"

"It has been so ordered by the Sultan, I hear."

"Upon the plain of Sakel?"

"That is the order. I heard it almost as soon as it was issued, from the kaid of blacks."

"And Sakel," continued the Berber, "is some distance from the city, and within an hour's sharp ride of the great ravine."

"True, but it is very level ground, and the troops will reach it before the second morning prayer."

"Ismael, I misdoubt this lab el barode. Under cover of 'powder playing' an expedition to the hills may be intended. You must ascertain whether—"

"My lord need give himself no uneasiness. There is not bread enough in the camp for two days. Were there any design against our people, every baker in the city would have received orders to bake a supply of bread for the troops.

My lord may trust in me. I know that there is nothing to fear in the movement to-morrow; but, to make sure, I will go to all the bakers in the camp. Where shall I meet my lord to-night?"

"At the north gate. I shall pass through it with a party, but I care not to be recognized. If you find that all is right, you will give the usual blessing on travelers; but if there is any ground for suspicion, you will join yourself to my party, and pass out with us. You can return in the morning, when the gates are opened for the day."

With this understanding, the Berber, after the usual compliments, took his leave of the baker, and passed into the street. The twilight was fading, and by the time that he had reached the house where were secreted the sisters, it was quite dark. He hesitated for a moment, and then, as if suddenly resolved, tapped in a peculiar manner upon the door.

It was immediately opened by Edward, who started and would have opposed his entrance, but with a quiet "*buenos noces, senor,*" Casbin slipped by him and entered the court. By the time that Edward could secure the door and follow, he found the maidens in the act of welcoming the intruder as an old friend—a welcome in which he was fain to join, when he found that there stood before him the famous Berber chief.

The proposed plan of escape was explained by the young chieftain in a few words, and, as may be supposed, met with the ready approval of the maidens. The elevation of their apostate cousin to the dignity of kaid struck them with dismay, and they felt that the only chance of escape from his clutches would be in instant flight from the city. Without hesitation they expressed their willingness to set out at any moment; a willingness in which they were joined by Edward, when he found, by a few casual questions, that Abdallah and his daughter were to be of the party.

There was something more than usually grave in the manner of the Berber. The boyish tone and the mirthful and mischievous sparkle of his eye were gone, or rather seemed to be subdued by an expression of thought and care. An air almost of sadness passed occasionally across his youthful features.

Juanita marked the change. Accustomed to obey each impulse of the moment, the young girl started forward and placed her hand upon Berber's arm,

"There is peril in the path you propose that we should follow," she said, looking inquiringly into his face.

"Not so," said the Berber. "Nothing to excite your fears."

"Nay," interposed Juanita, "let us know the worst. No danger can equal that which we fly from."

"As I live, I know of no danger beyond the city walls which, with proper prudence and care, we cannot avoid. But, why do you ask so earnestly?"

"Because, señor," replied Juanita, hesitatingly, "because your manner is so changed. You look so serious, so—"

The Berber laughed gaily, and taking Juanita's hand, led her deliberately away, and beneath the arches of the gallery into the inner court.

"There is danger, señorita, great danger, but it threatens not you—I must meet it and brave it."

"What is it? Where is it?" demanded Juanita.

"Here, señorita. It lies in the sparkle of those eyes—in the breath of those lips—in the glow of that cheek—in the wave of those ringlets."

The young man, as he spoke, looked at the maiden with a glance so impassioned, that her eyes fell, and the red blood mantled from bust to brow.

"So, señorita," exclaimed the Berber gaily, after a pause, "you think my manner changed. Indeed, you are observant. But come, tell me which you like best—the mirthful or the grave—the boy or the man?"

"As a brother," replied Juanita, looking up artlessly, "I think I should like the boy best."

"But as a lover, señorita?"

"Oh, in a lover, I am not sure that I should like either."

"But suppose you were compelled to choose?"

"Well, then, as a lover, I should prefer a proper proportion of the serious and the reserved."

Juanita again laid her hand on the young man's arm, and looked up in his face.

"But indeed, señor, you are changed—something troubles you—tell me what it is—have you enemies?"

"Enemies!" interposed the Berber, "I wish it were with my enemies alone that I had to contend. The contest would be one of pure unmixed pleasure. But to struggle with the prejudices and passions of friends—to find your best laid

schemes forever thwarted by the baser nature of the tools with which you have to work—to be continually collecting and binding the rich elements of a great empire, only to see them continually scattered and destroyed—that, girl, is enough to weigh with thought and care the most gay and buoyant spirit."

"But not to make a great spirit despair," exclaimed the maiden, drawing up her slight figure; "No, not even to despond for a moment. Victory, with the means of winning it in our hands, is easy; but to create the means with which we win it, is glorious. Oh, señor, I have thought of what you told me of your dream of empire. Believe me, I sympathize with you in your desire to drive the Paynim from the land. 'Twill be a glorious struggle. But ah! a struggle nobler—more glorious still, is that to nationalize your tribes, to subdue their passions, heal their hereditary feuds, and set them in the path of civilization."

Juanita's voice began to rise, and her eye to flash, when suddenly she caught the intense look of admiration that beamed from the Berber's face. The young girl paused.

"By heaven, señorita, you are—you must be—you shall be—" The young man paused, evidently restraining himself with an effort. "My inspiration! my divinity! I will embroider your name on my banners. I will—"

The protestations of the Berber were cut short by a noise at the door, and an exclamation from Isabel; a slight crash, and the rush of a dozen men into the vestibule.

Juanita flew back to the outer court, and seizing her sister by her robe, pulled the terrified Isabel towards the arches of the gallery; but before they could reach the passage a dozen men had forced their way, in despite of the opposition of Edward, and spreading along the side of the court, intercepted their retreat.

The Berber had followed the young girl with a rapid step, but on reaching the outer court, and seeing the house so completely in the possession of the intruders, he paused for a moment in doubt. Edward was still boldly confronting the soldiers, and offering such opposition as an unarmed man could make to their further progress. Already a dozen muskets were presented at his breast, when the Berber interfered. He saw that all resistance was useless, and that Edward was simply arousing the brutality of the guards by his excla-

mations and demands, made in a language they did not understand. Putting his hand upon the young man's shoulder, the Berber pulled him back, and enjoining silence, advanced himself and confronted the soldiers.

The young chieftain's mien was composed, but his mind was agitated with feelings of intense anxiety. For himself he feared nothing; he knew his ability to force his way out through the door, unarmed as he was, by a sudden exertion of his extraordinary strength and agility, or to escape by the terrace over the house tops. But how was he to save the sisters? As his mind rapidly ran over the chances, he could think of nothing better than to fly at once and endeavor to raise men enough to intercept their captors in the streets, or to attack the quarters of the Christian slaves, and free them by force. But to this plan there were numerous objections which presented themselves instantly to the quick mind of the Berber, and the idea was rejected almost as soon as formed.

A feeling of desperation began to steal over him, as the conviction grew that, for the present, he was powerless; still he quietly ran his eye over the group before him, in search of some figure that he might identify as the renegade kaid of the slaves. The light from the copper lamps at the angles of the court was none of the brightest; but still it was sufficient to reveal the fat face of the chief of the harem. The eye of the Berber lighted up as he saw him waddle in from the skeffa, and, puffing and blowing with the unusual exercise, look around with an air of authority.

"By whose warrant," demanded the Berber, in a stern tone, "is this outrage committed? Whose head will answer for violating the house of a true believer?"

The kaid of the harem puffed himself up with a long wheezy inspiration, and replied: "I enter this house in the name of the Sultan, and my head shall answer for it."

"In the name of the Sultan? In the name of that contemptible renegade, the kaid of the slaves, you should say. Think not that his warrant will save your head. Think not that Muley Ismael, to whom may God grant long life! shall never learn this prostitution of his name."

The old negro's eyes glowed with rage. There was something in the Berber's speech that touched his dignity, and it was some little time before he could recover breath enough to reply.

"The kaid of the slaves, ha! The kaid of the Christians, you say! Why, what dog are you that dares to spit on our beard? The kaid of the slaves! The renegade of yesterday, ha!—"

A light broke in upon the mind of the Berber, and he hastened to apologize for a supposition so injurious to the dignity of the chief of the harem, as that he should be the agent of a renegade. The old negro, naturally as good-natured as he was fat and stupid, was easily mollified; and led on by the wily questioning of the young chief, acknowledged that it was at the instigation of the Sultan Queen that he had been sent to seize a young Christian maiden. "Come," he exclaimed to his men, and pointing to the sisters, "here is what we have come after. As to these two," pointing to the Berber and the young Englishman, "we have nothing to do with them."

The maidens shrunk back as the kaid advanced towards them, when the Berber again interfered.

"You say that your orders were to seize a Christian maiden? Here are two. Beware that you do not exceed your orders."

The negro paused. The objection seemed to strike him. He gravely stroked his white beard, and rolled his eyes up in profound meditation.

The mind of the Berber had been much relieved upon finding that it was not the renegade with whom he had to deal. He knew that it was infinitely preferable for the sisters to be transferred to the harem of the royal palace than to the house of the kaid of the Christians; but as he looked at the stolid countenance of the puzzled negro there arose in his mind a faint gleam of hope that he could save one, if not both, from the temporary confinement (for he vowed that it should be but temporary) of the palace.

"Will it not be best," said the Berber, "for my lord the kaid to return to the Sultan Queen, and get her directions as to which of these maidens he is to take in charge?"

The negro rolled his eyes with a cunning leer; stupid as he was, he was not to be caught by any such trap.

"At any rate, you can take but one—recollect your orders. These maidens are the property and under the protection of a favorite of Muley Ismael—a man who, if the whim takes him, had as lief cut the throat of a chief of the harem as of the meanest Christian."

"Who?" demanded the negro, swelling and bristling with a sense of his own dignity.

"Who? Why the fire-eater—the infidel exterminator—the lion of the sea—Hassan Herach!"

"I was ordered by the sidana," replied the kaid, in a subdued manner, "to enter this house, and secure the person of one Christian maiden. I shall take one of these; I care not which."

"We will go together," exclaimed Juanita, when she understood the decision of the kaid.

"Do not—oh! do not separate us!" cried Isabel, clinging to her sister with a desperate grasp.

The trembling form of Isabel held for support upon the upright figure of her younger sister. Her face was buried in the long, loosened tresses of Juanita's hair, and tears and sobs gave utterance to her emotion.

The younger sister stood firmly supporting the drooping form of Isabel. No tears furrowed her cheek, but her lip quivered, and her eye wildly scanned the countenance of the Berber.

"I will take one of these—and will take but one," exclaimed the kaid of the harem, who began to feel the responsibilities of a position hetween the anger of Leila Ajakah on the one hand, and the vengeance of Hassan Herach on the other.

The Berber explained the kaid's words to the sisters. Juanita clasped her sister convulsively to her heart, and then raised her head to the young chieftain, who was standing at a little distance with his arms folded upon his breast, and with an air so impassive and composed that he looked more like an indifferent spectator of the scene than one of the most interested actors.

"If she remains and goes with you," said Juanita, speaking of Isabel, "will she be saved?"

"I cannot doubt it," quietly answered the Berber.

"Sister," whispered Juanita, "oh! sister, we must part." A cry of anguish burst from the weeping Isabel.

"Hush, sister; 'tis useless; we must part. I shall go with this officer of the court. Oh, sister, you will visit our native land again. You will sit by the banks of the Guadalete. You will remember me—you will pray for me. But why need I charge you? Me, sister, you never will, never can,

forget. I shall live in your memory—in your heart, as you do in mine. And oh! sister, dearest sister, if we meet not again in this world, surely the blessed Virgin will unite us in the next. Pray to her, Isabel, that it may be so."

A sharp cry—a heart-breaking moan, followed by choking sobs, made Isabel's reply.

Juanita raised her head again to the Berber.

"One of us must go with this man?" she demanded.

"I can see no help for it," he replied.

There was something in his calm tone, and composed, almost indifferent manner, that aroused the pride of the young girl.

Can it be, she thought to herself, that he is confident of our ultimate safety? and a glow of hope began to mount in her breast, but it was suddenly repressed. A feeling of bitterness usurped its place, as gazing into the eyes of the Berber she could read in their passionless, emotionless depths, not even a sentiment of curiosity, as to the decision she was about to make. Suddenly she started, and releasing herself from the embrace of her sister, advanced a step or two toward the Berber.

"Tell this officer of the court," she exclaimed, in a steady voice, "that I am the one he was ordered to take. I am ready to go with him."

As she spoke, the strong emotion that had been banished for a while from the Berber's face, rushed to his eyes and cheeks and brow, but he contented himself with saying in a low tone:

"You have decided well, señorita; go without fear; you will be kindly treated. They must first convert you to the true faith. Before their persecutions on that ground trouble you much you shall be as free as the air. Trust me, señorita!"

"I do, Señor. God knows I trust in your courage; in your will; in your faith, as I do in His mercy and goodness. God knows that I do, and will forgive me for it. Farewell!"

Juanita flew to her sister, embraced her, took leave of the excited Edward (who, at the moment, would willingly have braved the swords of all the swarthy black bearded guards who stood silent and indifferent spectators of the scene), and pulling the folds of her haick around her head, signed to the fat old kaid to lead the way.

As she entered the darkened vestibule, she felt her hand pressed, and the voice of the Berber murmured in her ear, "Courage and confidence, Juanita—brave, noble, generous Juanita! Have faith in me—faith not only in my will, but my power!"

"Faith in him!" muttered Juanita. "Oh! I would sooner die than doubt. Oh, Holy Virgin, pardon me! if in this extremity of peril, I rely too much on aid of mortal!"

CHAPTER XXXIX.

It would be difficult to decide which of the two emotions, rage or astonishment, rose the highest in the bosom of Fatima, as, upon the first tap at the door, in obedience to the orders of her master, she drew back the bolts, and gave admittance to the Berber and the young Englishman, who entered, supporting between them the trembling figure of the almost insensible Isabel.

Seated apart in the skeffa, but so as to command a view of the court, she rolled her head from side to side, gesticulated violently, and continued muttering to herself in a gibberish of her native dialect, and emitting a stream of squeaks and grunts, mingled with her customary Arabic exclamations.

The appearance of Isabel, after she had, as she thought, disposed of her so effectually, was a mystery that she could not comprehend. The idea that Juanita might be taken in preference never even entered her head.

The glance of Xaripha was, for a moment, directed from the form of Isabel, who was sobbing in her arms. It sought the face of Fatima, and there was that in the eye of the young girl that made the old woman shrink with fear, and cease her contortions and mutterings. She saw that her mistress suspected her agency, and that Xaripha's glance indicated a degree of anger that might not be easily appeased.

But her astonishment mounted almost to terror, as, upon replying to another tap, the opened door gave admittance to the rais. She had never before seen the famous rover, except on that one unfortunate time when bidding adieu to Isabel in the *patio* of the adjoining house, and she had no idea of the

relationship or the likeness of the brothers. As the rais threw back the hood of his djellabeah, and disclosed features the exact counterpart of the lovor of Xaripha, the old woman uttered a prolonged "Yah! yah!" and retreated to the further corner of the skeffa. A profound conviction of the agency of djins rushed upon her mind, and it was some time before she could so far recover herself as to close and secure the door. A little light, however, began to dawn upon her, when upon taking a look into the court, she saw Xaripha and her lover draw aside, to give room to Hassan, who, with impassioned and anxious looks. flung himself by the side of the Gaditana.

It is needless to dwell upon the explanations that followed, or upon the dozen plans for the rescue of Juanita, that were rapidly proposed, and quickly abandoned as impracticable, by the excited rais.

The consultation was interupted by the Berber, who issued from beneath the shadow of the gallery, where, for half an hour, or more, he had been sitting in silence, and motionless with his knees drawn up to his chin, and his face enveloped in the folds of his haick. All eyes were turned to him as he advanced.

Hassan sprang forward, and, placing both hands upon his shoulders, looked into his face.

"Are the eyes of the famous rover of Salee not sharp enough to see through a thin coating of paint?" demanded the Berber, with a smile.

The rais threw his arms round the speaker. Casbin warmly returned the embrace, at the same time giving and receiving several hearty kisses upon either cheek.

"A thousand things I would say to thee, oh, friend of my heart!" exclaimed the rais. "A thousand things I would tell thee, oh, companion of my boyhood! but one thing swallows up all others at this moment, and that is this maiden —this child—who has been seized upon by the hounds of the royal harem! What can we do to save her?"

"Nothing," quietly answered the Berber.

"Nothing!" exclaimed the rais. "Oh, Casbin Subah! when the lion carried off one of a shepherd's flock in the valley of Zebzah, you sat not by so tamely, and said 'Nothing!' That lion had your bullet in his brain and your spear in his heart, ere he had time to put his prey in his stomach. And

when the grandfather of boars ravaged the corn-fields and scattered the douahs of Tadulah, you—"

"Hold!" interposed the Berber. "Think not that I value the Spanish maiden less than the pet of a shepherd, or than a field of wheat, even if it was broad as the great plain of Marasche; or think not that I dread the wrath of the Sultan more than the rage of the lion or the boar. But to your question as to what *we* can do, I must still answer 'Nothing.' Leave it all to me; at present we must look to the safety of these. 'Tis time that we were on our way."

Advancing to Isabel, the Berber took her hand. "Courage, señorita?" he exclaimed. "Leave your sister's fate in my hands; with the blessing of God, I shall find some means of freeing her from the grasp of the Sultan Queen!"

"Can you?—will you?" energetically exclaimed Isabel, grasping his hand. Oh, señor, I fear it may not be! Tell me when, and by what means."

"Ask me not, senorita," replied Casbin, in a soothing tone. "I know not as yet which plan, of several, I shall adopt; but, believe me, it will be an effectual one. I feel as confident of your sister's ultimate release as I do of her present safety and bodily comfort."

The Berber turned away, and speaking a few words to Abdallah, advising him to hasten their departure, folded his arms and leaned in silent reverie against one of the slender columns of the gallery.

The manner of the Berber was cold and abstracted; but there was something in his assurances that aroused feelings of hope and confidence in the breast of Isabel—feelings that were perhaps somewhat heightened by the presence of her lover, and by his ready acquiescence in the suggestion to set out from the city, leaving Juanita behind. Could she have known, however, how much her lover's readiness to obey the Berber's injunction was due to a confidence in his power to rescue the young girl, and how much of it arose from a conviction that it was of no use longer to wait, connected with his anxious desire to put Isabel herself beyond danger—the Gaditana would not, perhaps, have so rapidly recovered from the first shock, or have been able to tread the streets with so firm a step, or guide her horse with so steady a hand.

Isabel's was that yielding, impressible, waxy nature, that by many men is esteemed the true type and standard of

feminine character. Like a bar of soft iron possessing no magnetic tension of its own, but eminently capable of it by induction, she readily acknowledged the influence of her mental magnet. Her mind assumed a degree of polarity, and at once pointed as willed the rais. He said, "set out for the hills," and Isabel obeyed with alacrity; although not half an hour before she had made up her mind that death, slavery, anything, would be preferable to going and leaving her sister behind.

In a few minutes all were in readiness, there being no heavy baggage to delay their departure. A few small packages of jewels and a moderate store or provisions were all with which it was thought prudent to encumber themselves.

Selim was dispatched by the rais with orders to the crew to guard their prisoners until morning, when they were to leave the city and return to Salee. The rais promised to join them in a few days, and in the meantime they were to await quietly his appearance, and if any inquiries were made as to his absence, to reply that the rover was kept at court by business with the Sultan.

It was a clear starlight night in which the party issued into the street. Abdallah led the way, followed by Hassan and Isabel; and then came Xaripha and Edward, followed by Fatima, who, despite the cautions of her master, could not help muttering to herself her wonder at the mysterious movements to which she found herself a party. The Berber brought up the rear. Several barriers, with closed gates, stretching across the streets, and thus dividing the town into numerous small sections, were encountered; but, at a word from the chief kaid of the gates, they were flung open, and the party allowed to pass without question.

Arrived at the gate in the principal or outer wall of the city, some little delay took place, but as soon as the kaid was recognized, the bolts of the small wicket in the great gate were drawn back, and free egress offered.

"God is God!" exclaimed a loud voice, as the travelers stepped beneath the arch of the gateway; "and may the angel of night guard from evil spirits all those who travel in the shade of his wings. Peace to the Mussulman. God is God! and there is none other!"

It was the voice of the baker; and in his salutation the Berber recognized the signal that had been agreed upon, and

an assurance that there was no movement against his people, concealed by the wily Sultan under the proposed military fête. The mind of the chieftain was relieved from one source of apprehension, and could now devote itself more exclusively to a consideration of the subject that was heaviest at the hearts of all, not even excepting Fatima, who, now that she had begun to get an idea of the true state of the case, shuddered to think that she had been the means of throwing the young Spanish girl into the power of the cruel and selfish Sultan Queen.

A short half hour's walk brought the travelers to the crumbling wall surrounding a saint's house. The sanctorium itself consisted of a small square building, containing a single room, and surmounted by a dome. An arched entrance, without a door, served for air and light. The floor was paved with coarse bricks, but upon the wood work of the roof were the remains of fine carving and gilding, and upon the cracked and crumbling walls weae traces of that elegant and fanciful arabesque for which Moorish art was once so famed. Within the enclosure, and around the dilapidated sanctorium, the ground was overgrown with brambles and gigantic cacti, so that there was hardly clear space enough for the mules and horses that, by the provision of the kaid, were assembled under the charge of a slave.

It took a few minutes to adjust the saddles, and to assist the females to their seats on the backs of the mules. In this the Berber offered no assistance, and made no suggestion. In silence he threw himself into the saddle, sat quietly for a moment, and then suddenly striking his spurs into his steed, a fine large gray, jumped him over the wall of the enclosure into the road. The barb, somewhat astonished at the unexpected call upon his agility, snorted with excitement as he reached the sloping ground on the other side; but as he crouched from the shock, and rose again, ready to launch out into the plain, his motions were arrested by a powerful arm that compelled him to instant quiet. Like a statue stood the horse beneath his motionless rider, until Hassan and Abdallah, mounting their horses, led their party through the gate and around by the walls to the road. As soon as they came in sight, the Berber wheeled his horse and placed himself at the head of the travelers; preserving from them a variable distance, but always sufficient to prevent any conversation. At

one moment both horse and rider would be distinctly visible in the clear starlight; the next, the gray barb would spring forward and disappear in the darkness, leaving, however, sufficient indication to the travelers in the sound of his hoofs, and in the crowd of sparks that, like a swarm of fire-flies, started up from the flinty ground, and flitted after his footsteps.

As the travelers moved on as rapidly as the darkness and the nature of the road would permit, their attention became gradually diverted from themselves to the strange actions of their guide. At first they supposed his eccentric movements had relation to their own safety; but soon it was seen that they could have no such object. The very demon of restlessness seemed to have taken possession of both steed and rider; and after each disappearance, all eyes were strained to watch for their return.

"He's a djin; yah, yah! he's a djin. I know him this time," muttered Fatima, as from her high saddle she saw the gray barb glint by for the twentieth time.

"Quiet yourself, dearest," replied the rais, to a whisper from Isabel. "There is no immediate danger. If there were, the Berber chief would be more cautious in his movements."

"He rides more like some wild demon than like a trusty guide," returned Isabel.

"But none the less to be trusted for all that," replied the rais.

"And Juanita?—"

"Is the very subject of his thoughts at this moment. I have known him well since his early boyhood; and I know the effect of mental excitement upon his strong bodily and muscular vitality. Believe me, he is revolving some scheme for her rescue, and his sudden spurrings are but the emphatic marks in the current of his thoughts."

"But has he the power?"

"He loves your sister?" replied the rais, stretching out his hand to Isabel.

"I think that he does."

"Then rest assured that she is safe. I know his resources of will and wit—they are boundless. I verily believe that if it served his purposes to do so, he could carry off the favorite of the royal harem from the side of the Sultan, despite of all

bars and guards. You recollect his adventure with the sheik of Arbazza?" continued the rais, addressing Abdallah.

"Can I have forgotten a feat, the fame of which yet echoes throughout the valleys of Tedler?" replied the kaid.

"He was but a boy—scarce twelve years of age; but it was a deed that put to shame the oldest heroes of the tents."

Xaripha and Edward drew up closer to the speaker. The rais looked around cautiously for a few moments. The country was open, and no signs of human life near.

"The sheik of Arbazza was a shereef and a saint," began the rais, in a low but distinct voice. "He was of a pure Arabic stock, and a bitter hater of the Berbers. He was also the wealthiest man in all the kingdom of Fez; and among his riches he possessed one thing that he valued more than all the rest—a mare of the most famous blood of Duquella. Her pedigree could be traced back for ages, and the fame of her beauty and her speed filled the whole land. She was a thorough-bred 'deafener' and 'wind-drinker.' She was as the apple of his eye; and proud was the sheik of Arbazza that he was the owner of a creature that for beauty, fire, speed, and endurance, could not be matched, travel the world over.

The sheik of Arbazza was at feud with several of his neighbors, both of plain and hill; and numerous attempts were made by his enemies, and, if the truth must be told, by several of his friends, to dispossess him of his favorite. But the sheik was a wary man, and vain were all the efforts of treacherous friends and open enemies. He was also a boastful and an arrogant man; and he prided himself not a little in his ability to defeat and punish any attempt to carry off the descendant of the famous *Maha el Bahr*, ot "steed of the sea." Already had several gallant and adventurous spirits perished, and more had failed, and been driven back in disgrace, when the vanity of the sheik slipped the bridle of prudence, and galloped off with him without check or restraint. He published an invitation to all who felt disposed to steal his famous mare. He announced a defiance to the boldest and most adroit horse-stealers in all the empire. He even offered, in his vain sense of security, a reward of a thousand gold metcals to whoever should succeed in carrying off *El Hassaneh*, or the Beautiful. Of course, after this, the watchfulness of the sheik was not relaxed, or his precautions decreased. Each

night the mare was picketed by the door of his tent. One end of an iron chain was put around her leg, and locked, and the key deposited in the sheik's girdle; the other end of the chain was brought within the tent, passed under the sheik's bed, and fastened to the tent-pole. Within reach of his hand stood his loaded gun, the match always burning—and the sheik was the most famous marksman of the tribes. Without the tent a pack of the largest and fiercest dogs threatened every intruder with instant death.

Among the enemies of the sheik the principal one consisted of a portion of the Beni Mozarg; and of course nothing would have delighted the Berbers more than for one of their number to have achieved the feat of carrying off the sheik's famous mare. On the one hand was every inducement to attempt the adventure—pride, revenge, the love of glory, and an admiration of horse-flesh; but on the other hand, there were too many obstacles in the way—the distance to the plains; the difficulty of approaching the douah; the canine guards; the chain; and more than all, the watchfulness and prowess of the sheik. These obstacles had been found by repeated experiments insurmountable, and the very bravado of the sheik, while it was looked upon as the worst of insults, helped to deter the boldest of the Berbers from undertaking the adventure.

At that time Casbin, son of the amekran of the Beni Mozarg, was scarce turned of thirteen, but already had he killed the king of beasts, and acquired the name of *el subah*, or the lion. It was noticed that the young prince was for days busy in constructing a strong basket, or rather cage. The holes in it were just wide enough to admit a hound's nose; and the withes were of the stoutest kind, and wound with strips of untanned hide. The basket excited much curiosity, but not a word did the young chieftain vouchsafe as to the purpose to which it was to be applied. But great was the surprise when catching a common cat, he enclosed her in the basket, and securely fastened the door.

It was in a terrible storm of snow that Casbin, with his cage and cat strapped behind his saddle, set out secretly from the kassir. Toward night he reached the low land and the neighborhood of the tents of the sheik. Under cover of the storm, which had changed as he descended to one of rain, mingled with sleet, he approached quite near to the douah,

Here he remained until some time after midnight, when, mounting, he rode boldly up to the sheik's tent. The dogs were wide awake, and in full chorus, but they were busy with some other object of alarm, and did not perceive him until he was within fifty yards. He stopped, uttered the cry of a jackal, and instantly the whole pack came bounding towards him. Casbin lowered the cage to the ground and retreated. The attention of the dogs was wholly engrossed by the cat. They thrust the points of their noses into the meshes of the basket; they rolled it over and over; they shook it and tried to pull it to pieces with their paws and teeth; they fought with each other in their eagerness for a bite. They had no eyes, ears, noses, or mouths for anything except the cat.

Making a detour, Casbin came upon the tent from the other side. At a proper distance he slipped from his horse, secured him in a moment, and advanced to the tent slowly. Noiselessly, with his breast to the ground, the young prince crept up and put his head in under the curtain. All was dark, save a faint glimmer that came from the women's apartment. The sheik was asleep. Casbin drew his body into the tent. The first thing he did was to feel for the gun, which he noiselessly emptied of the ball, and replaced in its position. He then drew his knife, and stretching himself by the side of the sheik, deliberately began cutting through his woollen sash, first on one side and then on the other. The slumbers of the sheik were far from sound, but so quietly and skilfully was the operation conducted, that he was not awakened, nor any alarm given to the other inmates of the tent.

The front turns of the sash were lifted from the sleeper. Upon running his hands through the folds Casbin lighted at once upon the key. The most difficult part of the adventure was achieved. Casbin stuck his dagger in the ground in front of the sheik's face, and as slowly and as noiselessly as before crept under the door curtain of the tent.

There stood the noble animal—*El Hassaneh*, the Beautiful. The rain had ceased; the clouds had suddenly broken away, and the bright starlight, mingled with the first faint sheen of dawn, revealed her beautiful proportions to the young prince. But not long did he tarry to admire. He took one look to make sure that it was indeed she, the much-

praised and oft-described beauty, and then, applying the key to the padlock, liberated her foot from the chain. He threw over her head a hempen bridle. He freed her fetlocks from the cords by which she was picketed. He vaulted on her back.

"Oh, Sheik Ali!" shouted the youth, "come forth and bid adieu to your favorite!"

No answer was returned, and Casbin, springing lightly to the ground, seized the end of the chain, and giving it a vigorous shake, vaulted again to the back of El Hassaneh.

"Come forth, oh most arrogant sheik of Arbazza!" shouted Casbin. "Your mare will not leave you without returning you thanks for your favors."

The curtain of the tent was thrown violently aside. One glance showed to the horror-stricken sheik his favorite freed from her chain, and with some one on her back. He hesitated not an instant. With a groan of rage, he raised his gun to his shoulder and fired. What was his astonishment to find that the audacious rider still preserved his seat.

The report of the gun and the burst of boyish laughter that followed it, aroused all the inhabitants of the douah. The Arabs came pouring out of their tents.

"Oh, most renowned sheik;" cried the prince. "Thou former master of El Hassaneh! Disturb not thy soul with passion, and be not above listening to advice from the beardless. Never, oh, sheik! attempt to shoot any one without a ball in your gun. Ha! ha! ha! And as to your mare, comfort yourself. I have taken her, but it is merely an exchange. I leave you a very good horse. The thousand metcals you offered as a reward you can keep to make up the difference between him and the mare. A beautiful day to you, oh sheik! and may the Lord guard you with better care than you have bestowed upon El Hassaneh."

The young prince wheeled his well-won treasure, and giving her the rein, was off like a bolt from a bow. Terrible were the shouts of rage that arose behind him, and then a sudden volley sent the bullets flying after him; but what with the distance and the darkness, they flew wide of the mark.

And then such a saddling of horses, and such a mounting in haste. The only hope, of course, was to catch him by tiring the mare down by relays of horses, picked up at the different douahs that should be passed. But it was in vain.

The horsemen of village after village, with fresh steeds joined in the chase; but El Hassaneh carried light weight, and at a steady pace, that equaled the full speed of the freshest of her pursuers, she winged her way ere mid-day across the plains, and paused for breath only amid the thickets on the slopes of the mountains.

The rais paused; but before any of his auditors had an opportunity to make any comments, the hero of the story himself dashed up, and drew rein beside the group.

"We will here make a large detour," he exclaimed, "to avoid some parties of blacks who are eating up the tribute of several villages of Arabs hereabout. We must reach the thicket of ilex, on our left, before it grows much lighter. Close up, keep silence, and move a little faster."

The manner of the Berber was abrupt, and his voice somewhat stern; but there was something in its tone that spoke of confidence in himself, and, consequently, bespoke confidence in his hearers. Without reply they spurred up their beasts, and followed the lead of the gray barb and his rider, whose mood seemed to have suddenly changed from one of furious restlessness to extreme quiet—the gray ambling along as soberly as Fatima's mule, and his master preserving his position at the head of the party in silence, excepting occasionally humming, in a low tone, snatches of a Berber song.

The scraggy oak and pine covering was reached as the sun was rising over the lofty Atlas. Keeping just within shelter of the wood, so as to be screened from observation, the Berber again turned to the East, and moving on until the sun was fifteen or twenty degrees above the horizon, halted his party for breakfast in an open glade, where a slender thread of water trickled down a ledge of rocks. The soil around was freshly furrowed in various directions—the marks of the wild boar, in his search after truffles; but no "Father of Tusks" appeared to disturb their repast.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE sun had declined from the meridian far enough to give the shadows of the travelers a perceptible inclination toward the East, when emerging from the wood into the open plain, their course was directed by the Berber a little

more to the south of east. The foot of the hills was close at hand, and far in the distance, to the west, were the domes and minarets of the capital.

As they came to a small elevation of ground, overgrown with palmetto bushes and wild thistle, the Berber halted the party, dismounted, and, throwing the rein of his horse to the kaid, plunged into the bushes and ascended the hillock, which commanded an extensive view of the plain.

In a few moments he returned, bringing with him a man whom he introduced to the travelers as their future guide. The Berber assured the travelers that all dangers were passed, and that they might trust themselves in perfect confidence to the guidance of the man before them, who was one of his most faithful followers, and one of the chain of advanced sentinels that it had been found essential to push out from the base of the hills.

"You see those ruins on the crest of that cliff," said Casbin, pointing to the objects indicated by his speech. "They are about two hours' ride from this spot, by the direct road; but as you had better, perhaps, deviate a little to avoid the only Arab douah that lies hereabout, it may take you until near sunset to reach them. But once there, and you are perfectly safe. The ruins, which are the remains of an old Roman castle, stand upon the further brink of a narrow but deep ravine, spanned by a bridge of ropes; cross the bridge, enter the ruins, and take up your quarters there until I join you. Fear not to be disturbed. The spot has the reputation throughout the empire of being the worst haunt of djins and evil spirits of any place in the world. You are not afraid of spirits; and as for the Moors, or, for the matter of that, my own countrymen, there are not five men in all Barbary who could be hired to enter the crumbling archway. Rest, without fear, until to-morrow evening, when I will join you, and shall bring with me—"

"My sister?" exclaimed Isabel, with emotion. "Oh, señor, promise that you will do so; promise that you will free her, and bring her with—"

"Nay, señorita," said the Berber, advancing his horse and taking her hand. "I cannot promise that; but I do promise to bring you news of her, and good news, too. Till then, adios!" and waving his hand, he spurred his horse and galloped off in the direction of the city.

Before resuming their advance, the rais put a few questions to the guide; but the man evinced a decided indisposition to answer, and his replies were expressed in an almost incomprehensible jargon of Berber and Arabic. He admitted, however, that he had been on the watch since morning, and that from his post his eye had commanded a distant view of bodies of horses coming out of the city, and moving towards the field of Sakel. He said that there was nothing to fear even from the village of Arabs that his master had mentioned, but inasmuch as he had been directed to lead the party around rather than by it, he should do so, and that there was nothing more to be said about it. Pulling the straps of his sandals and tightening his belt, the fellow shrank with a dogged air from any further questioning, and placing himself at the head of the party, led off at a rapid step, which he slackened not for three hours. Twining round and round, amid the little hillocks dotting the country, or carefully threading the water gulleys and dry beds of rivulets, he conducted the travelers through an open and apparently, as viewed from a distance, a level country, without their coming in sight of a living creature save a few stray sheep or wandering cows, with the tall white cow-birds perched upon their backs or stalking by their sides.

During the latter part of their course the path had been gradually ascending. Suddenly, upon gaining a clear and level piece of ground, the whole country behind them opened to their view. The city lay within sight, and at first they were quite startled to see it so distinctly, and apparently so near. The plain of Sakel, about half way between the city and this position, was pointed out by the guide. Although ten or twelve miles distant, the moving masses of horsemen and the tall white tents of the Sultan could be discerned.

In front of them, and right across their path, yawned a ravine, with almost perpendicular sides, and nearly two hundred feet deep. Some powerful shock of an earthquake had riven the slaty rock; and away on either side for miles the gap extended with a varying width of from two to three hundred feet. Just where they stood the ravine was the narrowest; the projection of two corresponding crags approximating the sides to within a distance of fifty feet. Advantage had been taken of this approximation to throw across a bridge of cords.

The construction of this bridge was exceedingly simple; and, although narrow and slight, it offered a secure passage to horsemen as well as pedestrians. Four small, but strong cords of twisted hide were stretched from side to side, and firmly secured to wooden pegs driven into holes in the rock. Upon these cords rested thin planks of oak. Thongs, passed through holes in the planks, fastened the planks to the cords. No parapets protected the sides.

A few bridges of the kind are to be found in the present day in Morocco; but they are wholly confined to mountain ravines. This kind of bridge would hardly answer for wide rivers, with, perhaps, low muddy banks; and the Moors have not the engineering skill to build any that would; although the absence of bridges is not, perhaps, owing so much to a want of skill as to the general debasement and misery of the people, and the selfish and unenlightened tyranny of the government. One or two structures of ancient date remain and the ruins of others are still to be seen; but, in general, the rivers of Morocco are crossed by fording and swimming, or in boats, and on rafts buoyed up by bundles of reeds or inflated skins.

The kaid and his party hesitated before setting foot on a structure apparently so slight and so frail, and, notwithstanding the assurances of the Berber guide that it would support the weight of as many horsemen as could be crowded on it, the kaid insisted upon dismounting, and crossing it first on foot.

A few minutes' climbing up a winding and precipitous path brought the travelers to an opening over an arched gateway in the crumbling walls, indicated by the Berber chief. Beyond this the guide refused to go. Even the rais and kaid entered with a look of caution and suspicion. Within, there was a large open enclosure, several hundred feet square, overgrown with bushes, amid which gleamed the marble of broken and fallen cornice, architrave and column. A space was cleared; carpets spread; the horses picketed, and a fire lighted. Fatima busied herself in preparing supper. Kaid Abdallah remained with the maidens; while the rais and his brother set forth to make an examination of the ruins, as a proper precaution to passing the night in a place so desolate and so likely to harbor wild animals; to say nothing of djins or the ghosts of defunct Mauritanians, Romans, and Goths, who, as

it was believed, still haunted the scene of their ancient orgies and feuds.

The examination was in every way satisfactory; but we will not follow the movements and doings of the party further at present. We must leave them for the night, as it best suits our purposes to devote the conclusion of the chapter to the movements of the Amekran of the Beni Mozarg.

Upon bidding adieu to the party that he had conducted safely through the most dangerous part of their journey, Casbin directed his course across the country toward the city, distant perhaps some twenty miles. The gray barb was of good blood, and answered to the spur at the top of his speed, for an hour, when suddenly drawing rein in front of a cluster of black tents, concealed in the hollow of a water-course, Casbin sprang to the ground. The shiek advanced to receive him with the customary salutations, but suddenly changing from Arabic to Berber, a few words were exchanged in the latter language, when disappearing behind the tents for a moment, he again emerged, leading a gaunt roan by a halter of palmetto cord. The saddle and bridle of the gray were quickly changed to the roan, when, vaulting to his back, the Berber held out his hand to be kissed, and then, striking his spurs into the fresh barb's shrunken flanks, was off again at full speed.

As the sun disappeared below the horizon, he stopped at an enclosure, surrounded by a fence of tall reeds. Upon a signal the gate was opened by a man with red hair and beard, and blue eyes, who seemed to expect the Berber to enter; but, dismounting, the chieftain threw him the bridle, and indicated, rather by gestures than by words, that the horse was to be led within.

"Will not my lord come in?" said the man.

"No, good Red-beard, I have not time. Take in this beast and feed him, and have him ready for me by midnight. Boroon—how is he?"

"The son of El Hassaneh is well," replied the man; "but he cries for his master."

"Give him one meal of dates to-night, and no water—nothing but camel's milk. Groom him thoroughly—spare no pains or labor. I have need of him in his best condition to-morrow. See to it, Red-beard—and have him also ready for me at midnight."

The Berber turned away. A walk of ten minutes surmounted a gentle elevation, and brought him to the gate of the city, which was not yet locked for the night. Without question he passed in, and threading the narrow streets, made his way to the palace. The gate was open, and everything gave token of a relaxation of discipline, which, under the best of circumstances, was never very strict. The departure of the Sultan, who had set out for the field of Sakel, and the absence of the kaid of the gates, had left the guards to their own inclinations, and the greater part of them were dispersed in the neighboring coffee-houses, where they were busily engaged in breaking the long fast of the day.

Slaves were passing in and out and no objection was offered by any one to the entrance of the Berber. Arrived, however, at the gate of the harem, admission was refused by a surly black eunuch, who, armed with his filela, kept watch and ward over the female slaves, whose duties required them to visit the cobahs or storehouses, in different parts of the palace. The Berber quietly seated himself upon the ground, so as to command a view of the slaves as they passed; but vainly he waited for some one with whom he could safely communicate, to appear. It became quite dark. From within one of the innumerable open patios of the harem gleamed upward the light of torches, while the tinkling of guitars, and the sounds of female voices in song, were upborne on the still air. The Berber rose, and gliding along the labyrinth of the outside courts and gardens, gained a position where the walls of the harem alone separated him from the musicians. Just above his head, and almost within reach of his hand, were two slender loopholes, for the purpose of giving light to one of the rooms surrounding the small patio. A heavy cylinder of wood, used as a garden-roller, was lying at hand. Placed on its end against the wall, it proved just long enough to enable the young man to reach the loop-holes with his hands, and draw himself up, so as to see into the room, and through two or three open arches into the court.

His position, liable as he was at any moment to discovery by some wandering custodian of the palace grounds, was full of danger; but all risk was amply repaid by the sight which met his eyes. Seated upon a low couch, beneath a silken canopy, sat the young Gaditana. Around her were half a

dozen young girls, in various attitudes of respect; before her two Egyptian dancing girls were posturing, in their graceful, but lascivious style, to the sound of castanets and guitars; slaves were moving about with trays of fruit and confectionery. At the first glance the Berber comprehended the whole scene. Knowing well the designs of the Sultana, he saw the hand of the astute old negress in this effort to divert the mind of the young girl, and to beguile her with the pleasures of harem life.

Juanita gazed with a listless air upon the dancers. Her thoughts appeared to be employed upon far different subjects, and yet her face occasionally wore an air of constraint, as if, in obedience to the dictates of policy, she forced herself to appear pleased with the attentions of those around her. There was, however, nothing desponding in her looks; on the contrary, there flashed from her eyes, every now and then, a look almost of triumph, that gradually subsiding, left, as predominant over all other emotions, an expression of quiet confidence.

The heart of the young man throbbed with the intense desire to make known his presence to the captive. It was with the view of opening some communication with her, and of sending her some message of encouragement and affection, that he had ventured within the palace walls; but he had had no opportunity of concerting measures with any of the harem inmates, and he had been compelled to trust to chance. In one point he had been fortunate beyond his expectations. He had been so lucky as to obtain a sight of the object of his affections, and to assure himself that she was in no danger of immediate ill-treatment. He saw her, not as his imagination had pictured her; abandoned to grief, doubt and fear, but calm, composed, and confident. It was the mien that best suited the high and self-relying spirit which had been fed upon visions of Berber nationality, until it had outgrown all relation to circumstances and details, except that of master and slave; and a thrill of passionate admiration quickened the pulses of his heart as the conviction grew upon him that her composure was the result of confidence in him—his affection, his will, his power.

He longed to apprise her of his presence, and, although she apparently needed them not, to whisper a few words of hope. For a moment he felt almost irresistibly impelled to call out

her name through the loophole, but the habitual prudence of the chieftain prevailed over the natural impetuosity of the youth and the lover.

"No, no," he muttered. "I will risk nothing. Luckily it is not necessary for her sake—her's is no whining, whimpering nature. How beautiful she is—and how queen-like! She—a girl! By heavens she shall become an empress! How composed she sits—how indifferent she looks! She gazes at that indecent posturing, but she sees it not. Ha! she turns her head! What contempt—what scorn! By the Virgin she adores, she is as pure of soul as she is lovely of form and face!—I should be a fool to doubt it."

The sound of male voices in loud conversation came from the neighborhood of the harem gate. The young prince leaped to the ground, replaced the roller, and stealing along in the shadow of the walls, threaded the intricate courts and passages with a rapid step. He apprehended no obstacle to his egress, but still he did not feel easy until he had passed, too quickly for recognition, or even salutation, the last lazy sentinel at the palace gates. The sight of Juanita had aroused a full sense of the value, to her, of his personal freedom; and love had succeeded in exciting a sensitiveness to danger which he had never before felt, and which the fate of empire, the welfare of his own tribe, or the natural love of life, would have failed to inspire.

It was with a buoyant spirit that he plunged into the narrow and crooked streets, where, however, it would take up too much of our space to follow him step by step.

CHAPTER XXXI.

"COME to prayers! Come to prayers!" drawled the mueddins from the tops of the minarets. The first flush of dawn rapidly diffused itself over the eastern sky. The gates were thrown open, and through the gaping portals poured a stream of turbaned heads, citizens and soldiers, horse and foot, young and old, all rushing to the plain of El Sakel. Outside the walls numerous parties of tent-dwellers, indifferently mounted on camels, horses, and donkeys, might have been seen coming

from their scattered douahs, all wending their way to the scene of the expected Lab el Barode.

And well worth a walk of ten or twelve miles was the sight of El Sakel on that morning, as twenty thousand men rose from their night's bivouac, and mounting their horses, began careering across the plain—the only attempt at order being an effort on the part of each troop to keep as close as possible to its own particular kaid. As the sun rose, fresh bodies came pouring in from the country around, until full thirty thousand were present. By eleven o'clock in the day, an equal number, composed of mounted Moors from the city, and Arabs from the tents, had assembled, and besides these there were countless hosts of pedestrians.

No spot of ground could have been found better adapted to the review and exercise of a large body of cavalry than the plain which had been selected. Three or four miles in length by one in breadth, and perfectly level, it presented a fine, hard, turfy substance. At the eastern side it was crossed by a slender tributary of the Ordom, beyond which the country stretched in an open plain, but comparatively broken and rough, to the foot of the hills. At the western extremity was a gentle elevation, surmounted by several large tents, in the centre of which, and conspicuous above all, stood the royal marquee, with its silken curtains and its banners of crimson and green.

The sun was within an hour of the meridian before any degree of order began to be evolved from the apparently inextricable confusion prevailing over the ground. The discharge of a small field-piece gave the signal. Furiously the kaids rode up and down, screaming their orders at the top of their lungs. Gradually the black troops began to arrange themselves in compact masses on one side, while the Moorish horsemen and populace occupied the other.

Suddenly the roar of artillery, a grand flourish of trumpets, and the crash of a thousand cymbals and kettle-drums announced the approach of the Sultan. Mounted upon a horse magnificently caparisoned, and surrounded by a small body of richly dressed negro slaves on foot, he issued from the curtained enclosure of the royal tent, and wheeled into the broad avenue formed by the masses of soldiers, citizens and Bedouins.

The Sultan himself was habited very plainly, in his usual

garb, a fine white haick and a monstrous turban; but gorgeous were the garments of his attendants. The crimson caftans of the body slaves and executioners, were thickly encrusted with the richest gold lace; while their bare necks and arms were loaded with jeweled chains and bracelets. Two bearers on either side supported by long poles, a large crimson umbrella over the monarch's head. Slowly, and with as pleasant a smile as it was possible for his toothless mouth to assume, he paced adown the lines. Two favorite kaids of the Soudan troops, with hands upon the bit, restrained the impatience of the fiery steed; while, at every three or four steps, the slaves on either side, turning to the soldiers and the populace, and bowing low, exclaimed—

"Sidi is well to-day!"

"Sidi is well to-day!" repeated the crowd, in slow and measured tone. "Sidi is well to-day! Thank God! God preserve Sidi!" at the same time bending the body, and placing the hand upon the head. Again and again was the same announcement made, and the same reply. At first a few voices took up the words, and from them they gradually spread to the assembled multitude, until they swelled upon the ear like the roar of the coming tornado, and then died away to the gentle murmur of the fitful breeze.

Arrived at the further side of the plain, and near the banks of the little stream we have mentioned, the Sultan dismounted. A thick carpet or rug, was spread upon the ground, and upon this was placed a large, richly ornamented morocco cushion. Muley Ismael seated himself upon the cushion; his slaves and guards drew off behind him. The principal officers and dignitaries arranged themselves on either hand and a little in the rear. Mingled with these were several renegades and the members of a French mission which had recently arrived with propositions for the ransom of certain slaves. At the feet of the Sultan gamboled his favorite son—the child we have before mentioned—an infant of some three years of age, and the only privileged intruder upon the narrow bounds of the imperial carpet. To many of the spectators, this child was an object of more interest than any thing else in the pageant. The doting fondness of his father was well known, and by not a few was it surmised that the desire to secure to him the succession would endanger the lives of his elder brothers and their adherents.

In front of the Sultan's position, and running directly by the edge of the imperial carpet, was a broad, firm, well-trodden piece of ground. No grass grew upon it; every blade having been trampled out in the frequently repeated exhibitions of equestrian skill, of which it had been the scene. The crowding of the troops, despite the desperate efforts of the keepers of the ground, reduced this space to a long, narrow avenue, flanked by dense masses of horsemen on the one side, with the imperial cortége and the banks of the watercourse on the other. Luckily for the pedestrians, there was at this end of the plain a number of elevations that commanded a view of the ground.

The Sultan gave the signal for the game to begin. Separating themselves from a body of picked horsemen, a small party of five or six, all of whom were captains in either the black or Moorish troops, dashed forward at full speed. Their generous chargers, urged to the highest exertion by the strongly aspirated "Ha, ha! Ha, ha!" of the riders, and the free use of the cruel Moorish spur, an instrument having, for rowel, a large iron spike of from five to eight inches in length, strained every muscle. Twirling their long guns round their heads, the horsemen brought them down, with the butts resting squarely against their breasts, and the barrels inclined downward over the heads of their steeds. Upon reaching the spot where the Sultan was seated, and just as they were about to dash by him, their pieces were simultaneously discharged; and each man drawing rein, the course of they horses was instantaneously checked. With haunches almost touching the ground, and quivering throughout every fibre, from the intense exertion of the sudden check to which thee were forced by the powerful Moorish bit, they rested a moment; the horsemen threw their muskets with a whirling motion into the air, recovered their horses with a single *demivolte*, and, wheeling slowly, walked them back to the place from whence they started.

Another party succeeded, going through the same evolutions, and then giving place to others who rapidly followed. Now and then a single horseman darted forth, and varied the monotony of the game by some extraordinary display of equestrian skill, which was always liberally rewarded with shouts of applause, Jumping to the ground, and again vaulting to the saddle; bending down and touching the ground,

and standing up in the saddle at full speed, were severally attempted. These feats, comparatively easy in the circus, where the motion of the horse is perfectly true, and where the rider can oppose centrifugal force to the attraction of gravity, are known to be extremely difficult in a straight course, especially the latter one; and it was only for a moment that the boldest and most dexterous of those who attempted it could retain their balance. They were no sooner on their feet than they were compelled to sink again to their seats in the saddle, or, as happened in two or three instances, be pitched headlong to the ground. Still, every attempt to ride standing up in the saddle, even at half speed, if successful only for a moment, received the loudest plaudits of the multitude. The same feat by two horsemen riding together seemed to be much more easily performed. The reins being intertwined, so as to connect the horses by the head, the riders stood up and succeeded in balancing each other until they reached the carpet of the Sultan. They were two well-known Arab kaids from the province of Darah, celebrated for its horses, and the most noted equestrians of their tribe Their performance was greeted with shouts of applause. Again and again they ran a course, introducing a variety of novel and difficult feats; changing horses at full speed; lifting each other from the saddle; stooping to the ground; vaulting from side to side; throwing themselves under the bodies of their horses, and riding in all manner of positions, which, in a straight wide course, with the common saddle, is, as we have said, incomparably more difficult than the most striking triumphs of the amphitheatre.

Of the performers none seemed to enjoy the excitement more than the horses themselves, and nothing could be more striking than the contrast between the languor with which, when the course was run, they returned to the starting point, and the fiery impatience evinced in every motion when preparing for the start.

For two hours and more an uninterrupted succession of "powder burnings," under the nose of the Sultan, had been kept up, and the interest of the performance was beginning to abate. Muley Ismael's face wore an air of abstraction, and he began to evince signs of restlessness and impatience. More than once it was observed that a sneer of contempt curled his lip. The courtiers noticed the look of dissatis-

faction, and earnestly they prayed that some better, or, at least, some bolder rider, might appear, who would divert the rising wrath of the Sultan, if only by a desperate and mortal fall.

It was just at this moment that there occurred a slight pause in the game. The eyes of the Sultan, and those of his attendants rolling in sycophantic sympathy with his, were turned aside in the direction of the lower end of the lists. Suddenly a single horseman sprang into the open place in front of a party who were preparing to start. No one could tell whence or how he came; and no time did the stranger give them for question or salutation. The beauty and spirit of the horse—a tall jet-black barb—and the graceful ease of the rider, excited at the first glance a glow of admiration.

"Ha—ha! Boroon!" exclaimed the horseman, at the same moment slipping his feet, which were unencumbered with spurs from the broad, sharp-cornered stirrups, and springing erect to the saddle. The gallant barb at the word sprang forward as if a thousand spurs were goading him. Firmly and gracefully his rider stood; one foot on the saddle, the other extended in the air; his left hand grasping the rein, his right raised aloft, with his polished musket twirling horizontally by the mere motion of the fingers, and so rapidly that it presented the appearance of a wheel.

As the head of the barb came on a line with the imperial carpet, his course was instantaneously arrested. So sudden and so complete was the check, that he did not even pass the carpet, but, sliding along a few feet with his haunches to the ground, brought his rider right abreast of the Sultan. The horseman leaped lightly from the crouching steed, and bending down touched the edge of the carpet, put his hand to his lips, and instantly sprang back with his feet to the saddle, when he stood erect for a moment, and then quietly sank to his seat, wheeled his horse, and leisurely walked him back to the end of the course.

Sixty thousand voices rent the air with a simultaneous shout of applause. Never had such a course been run in Morocco; never before had such a position been assumed with such boldness, or maintained with such firmness and grace, or finished with such precision and agility. Muley Ismael straightened himself up, glanced at the French Ambassador and his suite, grinned graciously upon his attend-

ants, and allowed several expressions of commendation to escape him. "Excellent! Wonderful! Well done! Thank God there is one man here to-day who knows how to ride!"

The deliberate pace at which the horseman returned to the starting-place, afforded all eyes a good opportunity of scanning his dress and person. As to his features, they were nearly concealed by the ends of his turban, which, with apparent carelessness, were allowed to hang down on each side of his face; but no outer garment concealed the proportions of his fine figure. A close-fitting caftan, or vest, of red cloth, over a shirt of linen, and a pair of short white linen trousers, set off and revealed his light but muscular form to the best advantage.

But not less worthy of admiration was the horse than the rider, particularly to judges of the animal, of whom there were not a few on the ground. The fine points of Boroon were noted and eagerly commented upon. His jet black skin, immaculate from color, except where his wide expanded nostrils exposed a delicate circle of pink. His small but long head, gracefully placed at the end of a tapering, tendinous, and slightly arched neck; his height—nearly sixteen hands; his broad chest; his oblique, muscular shoulders; his fine sinewy legs; long withy pastern, and the huge veins, lying just beneath the skin, and showing that a large part of his circulation was carried on over the surface, and, therefore, not liable to be hurried by the compression of contracting muscles; together with twenty other marks and points of more fanciful significance, were loudly indicated by the excited crowd, as with loosened rein, hanging head, and a composed step, he bore his master back to the starting point.

Not a look did the latter bestow upon the multitude. His whole attention seemed given to his horse. Leaning forward he patted his neck, pulled his ears, and caressed him in a variety of ways, at the same time addressing to him, in a low tone words of the most affectionate endearment.

"Oh! Boroon!" he exclaimed. "Son of the Beautiful! Breath of the East wind! Be true to me to-day—fail me not, for great is my strait, and sore would be my trouble. did I not depend upon thee! Quietly, Boroon!—save thy courage for the time of need—it is at hand. Oh! Boroon! fail me not, and her hand shall caress thee—her voice shall cheer thee! I swear it, Son of the Beautiful!"

Boroon replied to his master's words with an expansion of the nostrils, and a slow snuffle of delight; but he raised not his head, nor altered his gait, until he wheeled with his head pointing up the lists. Then, indeed, his whole manner changed. His head was erect, his eyes flashed fire, his breath was blown from his nostrils with a furious snort of impatience, the foam flew from his mouth, and every muscle quivered with excitement; but still he stirred not.

The shouts and exclamations subsided—a deep silence prevailed throughout the multitude.

"Ha! ha! Boroon!" exclaimed his master, and with a spring light as that of a wild-cat, the fiery animal started.

With a loud shout, the horseman tossed his musket high in the air, caught it as it descended, and instantly stooping from his saddle, placed it upon the ground. As he rose, he bent down again on the other side, touching the ground with his left hand. Again rising, he descended to the right, and so on alternately, a dozen times, in rapid succession, each time grasping the soil, and scattering it in the faces of the nearest soldiers. Arrived at the Sultan's carpet, he checked his steed again within a few feet of the edge—recovered him the next instant, and then forcing him into a series of lofty croupades and curvets, marked with the sharp corner of his wide shovel-shaped stirrup-iron the initials of the Sultan's name.

There was an instant's pause, and then such a shout went up as had never before echoed over the plain of El Sakel. Muley Ismael smiled, and again applauded; the royal attendants were of course vociferous, and swelled with their voices the roar of the soldiers and the populace. Even the sleepy little Muley Abderrhaman sprang to his feet at the front of the carpet and joined his childish cries to the rest. The letters were large, and scored roughly on the smooth, shining flanks of Boroon, were visible to all except the more distant spectators in the field.

Once more all sounds were hushed. The horses, even, seemed to partake of the sensation, and ceased their champing and pawing. Again the strange horseman commenced a career, but not with the same reckless impetuosity. It was observed that his steed, although plunging furiously, was kept well in hand, and all eyes followed, with intense interest, his every movement. He passed his gun without stopping to pick it up. What could he be going to do? Silence!—hush!

—not a whisper! His horse swerved violently from side to side. Expectation was excited to the utmost. He was evidently preparing for something desperate. Some daring feat; and novel, too, thought the crowd; else why move so slowly? and why such an air of preparation? The course was almost finished. He was nearly abreast of the seat of the Sultan, when suddenly his horse swerved violently to one side, bringing his hoofs on the very edge of the imperial carpet. At this moment it was observed that the horseman held a paper, which, bowing himself from the saddle, he threw into the lap of Muley Ismael. At the same instant, with a rapid sweep of his arm, he seized the young Muley Abderrhaman. Clutching the child by the clothes, the horseman swung him to his saddle-bow; growling, while bending over him in the act, almost in the ears of the astonished father, in the deep gutteral of the Arabic—

"Look to the paper, and when you want him, send to Casbin Subah!"

Wheeling his horse short round, the Berber leaped a corner of the royal carpet, knocking over one of the umbrella bearers, and dashing through the shrinking slaves in the rear of the Sultan. In a moment he was at the banks of the shallow stream, down which his steed scrambled with cat-like agility. A few jumps cleared the narrow bed; and then, breasting him by main force through a thicket of oleanders, the other bank was gained, and the gallant animal, with loosened rein, was skimming the plain in the direction of the hills, with a stride as steady, and almost as rapid. as the sweep of an eagle.

For a few minutes the Sultan, his officers and slaves were lost in astonishment. Stupefied at the audacity of the act, they stood as if doubting the evidence of their senses. In sixty thousand minds arose, simultaneously, an idea of djins, or of Eblis himself. The Sultan was the first to recover himself. He knew that the daring rider was no djin, and he bounded to his feet convulsed with rage and fear.

It is impossible to describe fully the scene of confusion that followed. The whole field was in commotion. Troop pressed upon troop. The masses swayed backward and forward, and orders, execrations, and cries of pain, made a terrible chorus with the stamping and snorting of steeds, and the clashing of muskets and sabres. Muley Ismael, crazy with

passion, drew his scimitar, and for a moment laid about him in every direction. He vociferated for his horse; tore his beard; dashed his turban to the ground, and shouted, like one possessed, his orders for instant pursuit.

The very ardor of the troops prevented these orders from being early obeyed, and before the masses of cavalry could extricate themselves from the confusion into which they had been thrown by the effort of all to be first in the chase, the Berber had been able to gain a start of more than a mile.

At length the Moors and blacks got under way. The little stream was something of an obstacle, but at various points it was quickly overcome. Over it poured the excited crowd, until more than thirty thousand horse thundered over the plain, gradually extending themselves in long lines, as the relative difference in the speed of their horses began to exhibit itself.

Soon those who lagged the most began to rein up, until ere two leagues had been passed the body of the pursuers was reduced to a few score of the best mounted, whose pure blooded, throroughbred steeds, enabled them to keep together and also to slowly, but certainly gain upon the Berber, whose horse labored under the terrible disadvantage of the additional weight of the child.

CHAPTER XXXII.

We left the kaid, Abdallah, and his party, snugly sheltered within the ruins. By blocking up the only entrance, except over the crumbling walls, their horses were allowed the privilege of roaming the area, without any danger of wandering wide, and a protection was also afforded against wild animals from without. Additional security in this respect was obtained from a fire of dried bushes, which was kept up during the night. No djins disturbed their repose; but the whole party was kept pretty much on the alert by the gliding about, among the fallen columns within the enclosure, of small animals and serpents, the fluttering of bats, and the hooting of owls, while from the outside came the cry of the jackal, and several times during the course of the night, the thundering

roar of the lion, echoing and re-echoing among the loftier crags of the mountains.

With the darkness all apprehensions fled. Morning came, and with it a sense of security, shared by the calm, cool, self-possessed rais, his gallant brother, and the philosophic kaid, to say nothing of the two maidens and the frightened Fatima, who had more than once disturbed the party with a yell of terror at sight of Eblis, or one of his imps, peering at her from the bushes.

The morning passed pleasantly and rapidly. Four of the party were in love—deeply in love. What occupation or amusement, besides loving, is in such a case required? In free communion with the object of the passion—bathing, and reveling, and melting in the light and warmth of his or her presence—loving and beloved—love is life, existence, time, the world, heaven, all, everything! Sensation is merged in the ocean of sentiment. Individuality loses itself amid the exhilarating fumes of excited fancy. Memory and fear, like night and the dew, flee before the hot burning sun of passion. The past and the future are swallowed up in the present—all nature is, as it were, interpenetrated aud surrounded by a luminous atmosphere of delight. But, alas! for the uncertainty and shortness of human happiness! The ocean will dry up—the fumes will vanish—the sun will set—memory and fear will return—and, except in a few rare cases, the lovers will pass their perihelion, like comets, with terrible rapidity, and go off, absorbing and condensing the luminous atmosphere into which the heat of love had expanded the nucleus of self.

But with these latter changes we have, luckily, nothing to do. The sun of our lovers was just on the meridian; the ocean of sentiment in full flow, and, as we have said, the morning passed rapidly and pleasantly. Abdallah, with the characteristic patience and gravity of his countrymen, sat with his feet drawn under him, quietly ruminating or dozing, while Fatima, selecting the smoothest block of stone, stretched herself upon it in the full sunlight, and sought the sleep of which she had been robbed during the night by the djins. Xaripha and her lover strolled around the enclosure, clambered over the ruins, examined several narrow passages and corridors, the arches of which were still remaining, and at length mounting the western rampart, joined the rais and

Isabel, who had secured a position that commanded a view over the vast plain stretching below them.

The sight of the distant minarets of Mequinez brought the sad fate of Juanita more strongly to mind, and it needed the continual assurances of the rais to satisfy Isabel that she would receive good news from her sister by the Berber.

The time for the arrival of the famous chief, on whom all hopes of the young Gaditana's safety now rested, began to approach. The sun had declined several hours from the meridian. The eyes of the party were directed down the declivity, and across the level country toward the field of El Sakel, when suddenly an exclamation from Xaripha called attention to a body of horsemen, which, in straining their sight to the distant camp, the rais and his brother had overlooked. Appearing at first like diminutive specks, they each moment grew larger and more distinct, an indication to the brothers of their course, and the speed with which it was pursued. A short half-hour brought them fully into view, when the rais, with the long and trained sight of the sailor, could plainly perceive a single horseman bearing something in his arms, and urging his steed to the utmost, followed, at a distance of a few hundred yards, by a dozen others, who were slowly gaining upon him.

Isabel sprang to her feet, and seized the arm of the rais. "'Tis the Berber," she exclaimed, "and he is bringing my sister with him! Say, is it not so? Oh, merciful God! they will overtake him!"

"No," returned the rais, straining his eyes, "it is not—it cannot be your sister. The burden he bears is too small; and besides, there never lived a horse that could carry such a weight in such a race. What can it be? 'Tis the Berber surely. By Allah, they gain upon him! They are bold riders and good horses behind him."

"But they are nearly blown," exclaimed Edward. "See! their riders lift them over the ground by main strength. Let us to horse and make a diversion. Perhaps our appearance will frighten them off."

The rais glanced at the unsaddled and picketed horses, and shaking his head, turned again to the chase. The ascent began to be more steep, and the difference in weight between pursuers and pursued, to tell still more fearfully against the latter.

"*Santa Maria purissima!* he can't escape!" exclaimed Isabel, sinking to the ground, and covering her face with her hands.

"Oh, Prophet of God!" shouted the rais. "He can't escape! Why don't he throw away his load? The man is mad! Ha! I see! 'Tis a child. Spur! spur! drive the rowels into him! Allah, most merciful, aid him!"

"Spur! spur!" exclaimed Edward, mad with excitement. "Drive the rowels into him! By heaven, they are upon you! Ha! well done!" he shouted, as the horseman dexterously recovered his fallen steed. "Hold out to the thickets and you may go clear."

"He cannot do it," whispered Abdallah, breathless with excitement, and the exertion of springing up to the parapet. "They gain upon him too rapidly. He can barely cross the bridge unless he throws away his load. He is lost! By Allah, he is lost!"

"No," shouted Xaripha, starting and throwing aside her haick. "Never! It shall not be. To the bridge! quick! To the bridge!"

As she spoke, she seized the hilt of her fathers's scimitar and drawing it from its sheath, darted with the glittering blade in her hand to the gateway of the ruins. With the impulsive promptitude of a lover, Edward was the first to comprehend and follow her movements. He sprang after her but ere he had issued from the archway, Xaripha was half way down to the bridge. The remaining more open and level space she passed as if with wings. Her tight-fitting caftan and short skirt afforded every facility to the motions of her well-turned limbs. Her long hair floated in a cloud of ringlets behind her, and her slippered feet seemed scarcely to touch the ground. But rapid as were her motions, ere she reached the bridge, she was overtaken by her lover. "Xaripha!" he madly shouted; "Hold! Give me the sword. I will defend the passage though they were a thousand. Back to the ruins. Give me the sword and leave me."

Xaripha had but obeyed the first impulse of her woman's wit, without considering the danger, or her lack of the requisite strength. She felt the hot breath of her lover on her cheek, and his touch upon her shoulder, and overcome by excitement and exertion, she stopped and sank to the ground.

"No, no," she exclaimed, breathlessly. "Defend not the bridge. Cut the cords behind the Berber! Quick! Away!"

Edward seized the sword. An impatient gesture from Xaripha permitted no pause, even had he been disposed to make one. With a bound he reached the bridge. The Berber was but a few yards on the other side. His laboring horse, struggling upward slowly, but with that determined courage and perseverance, which, as much or more than physical power characterizes in all animals the pure-blooded, thoroughbred. Xaripha, having recovered her breath, sprang to her feet. She waved her hands. She shouted and gesticulated—

"Come on! come on! Ha! Have a care. They are close upon you. Spur, spur! A few steps more and you are safe. Oh, Prophet of God, help! help!"

The Berber glances up to the young girl. It seems to him the vision of an angel. Both man and steed gather fresh energy from her encouraging shouts. Boroon lengthens his stride, and gathers himself more quickly. For a moment he gains rapidly on his pursuers. A few jumps, and the foot of the faltering steed is upon the bridge. The Moors are not fifty yards in the rear. The bridge is passed, and on the instant the scimitar in the hands of the young Englishman swings in the air. As the hoofs of Boroon strike the last plank, the keen blade falls on the tightened cords. Again and again; and quick as thought the cords are severed, and the bridge hangs dangling into the abyss. The Moors are at the yawning gulf. With difficulty do they save themselves from going over into it. With difficulty are their trained horses checked upon the brink of the precipice, from the very edge of which their hoofs topple down earth and stones, as they crouch to the desperate strain of the cruel curb.

Casbin threw himself from his horse, tossed the wearied child into the arms of Xaripha, and then, darting back, seized Edward by the arm, and hurried him a few steps up the ascent.

"Some of those fellows have guns," he exclaimed; "and it is better to put these rocks between us and them. They did not dare fire at me for fear of hitting the child, but they will make a target of you if you wait till they recover their wits and their breath. But here we are perfectly safe, and can afford to laugh at their beards!"

"But what if they should cross the ravine?" said Edward.

"No danger of that," replied Casbin, leisurely ungirthing Boroon's saddle, and wiping the foam from his sides and limbs with a bunch of leaves. "They cannot cross save by a midnight ride around through a rough country for horsemen, They will not think of it. But it was a lucky thought, that of cutting away the bridge, and well and promptly executed. I owe you many thanks."

"Not mine was the thought," returned Edward. "Your thanks are due to this maiden."

"Ha!" exclaimed the Berber. "Is that so? Indeed, I have not done women's wit justice. I supposed there was but one who could have thought of such a thing; but she, I doubt not," continued the young man, speaking to himself, "could have executed it as well."

Advancing to Xaripha, he seized her hand. "A thousand thanks, fair maiden. You have saved—not my life; that was hardly in danger, for I should have reached these thickets; where, on foot, it would have been impossible to overtake me; but you have saved what I value as my own life; you have saved Boroon. I should have been compelled to abandon him, and the vile Moors would have carried off the son of El Hasseneh."

"A gallant steed, indeed!" replied Edward, "to carry overweight in front of such horses as followed you. But tell us of the race. We have watched your course for the last half hour, but we saw nothing of the start."

The Berber uttered a scornful laugh, and turning, laid his hand impressively upon Edward's arm. "Your words mean well, but if I should translate them into Amazerg, or Arabic, they would offend Boroon. Luckily he does not understand Spanish. Think you that he would mind the additional weight of that child, overwhelming as it would be to a common horse, in a fair race with anything of this kind in Morocco? Know, oh, brother of my friend! that Boroon started with thirty thousand at his heels. His feet had swallowed more than half the ground between this and Sakel, and the longest winded of his pursuers were blown—dead beaten, when, unluckily, we encountered a body of fresh horse. They took up the chase. Their steeds were good, and Boroon is mortal, and so they gained upon him. And again I thank you, maiden, that they did not capture him."

The kaid, accompanied by the rais, assisting Isabel down

the declivity, now appeared. At sight of her Casbin took the child in his arms, and turned toward her. Isabel, pale and trembling, was too excited to speak.

"I promised, señorita, that I would bring you news of your sister. I do so, and good news, too. I have seen her."

Isabel gasped for breadth.

"Where is she?" she exclaimed, as she recovered her voice. "Did she come with you? Has she escaped? Oh, tell me!"

"Calm yourself, señorita. I have seen her; but she saw me not, and I spoke not with her. But you may believe me when I say that she is well; well in health and spirits; and that she is in no danger of ill treatment of any kind."

"But when shall I see her again?"

"In three days at farthest?"

"Are you sure? Oh, deceive me not."

"This child is full security for her safety and freedom. I confide him to your care; he is a precious hostage. But come, I see you all look anxious and inquisitive; let us into the palace of the djins. When I have thoroughly groomed Boroon, I will tell you of my adventure."

The day drew to a close; night came on; and again was the fire kindled, and supper prepared; after which the events of the day were thoroughly discussed. Casbin drew a vivid sketch of the Lab el Barode. He enumerated the feats of equestrian skill—described the array of the Sultan and court; the appearance of the troops; and pictured in a humorous light, and with a certain degree of boyish glee, the consternation and confusion that reigned behind as he launched out for the hills.

Upon one point, however, his manner was unusually close and guarded. He was sufficiently free in his assurances of Juanita's health and safety; but he adroitly avoided all questions as to the details of his visit. There were feelings connected with that visit that he did not care to have probed.

It was quite late when Casbin rose; and commending Boroon and the young Muley Abderrhaman to the care of the brothers and the maidens, intimated a necessity for his departure. He promised to be with them again at early dawn, when he would give them directions as to their future movements. The brothers accompanied him to the entrance of the ruins, which they secured behind him, and then made

their preparations for another watchful but less anxious night; while the Berber, tightening his girdle, and carrying his short straight sword in his hand, in readiness for any adventurous animal, pursued his way up the mountain side with a step as firm and unhesitating as if it had been in broad day.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Upon the breast of Isabel the little Muley Abderrhaman forgot the fatigues of his desperate ride; and a night's sound sleep, from which he awoke only to the caresses of the maidens, soothed his grief and calmed his fears. Boroon, too, seemed none the worse for his exertions. With head erect, and expanded nostril, he saluted the rising sun with a succession of vigorous neighs. Stamping the ground in pride of recovered strength; with bristling main and arched tail, and eye flashing, bright, fiery as the gleam of sunbeams from a Damascus scimitar, he seemed to wish to challenge the whole world of horses to another trial of speed and wind.

"Ha! Boroon! Brave Boroon! Thy pride has come to thee with the morning—thy strength is renewed by the dawn. What would'st thou have? Would'st run with the sun? Would'st thou race with the light?—for no mortal horse is thy match, oh, thou son of El Hassaneh!"

While speaking the Berber entered the ruins, and with him an attendant, bearing a bag of dates and a skinful of camel's milk. But it was with evident reluctance, notwithstanding the daylight and the presence of his master, that the man set his foot within the castle of the Romi, and, with a sharp look-out for djins, proceeded to feed and groom the spirited Boroon. It was not until this latter operation had been finished to his satisfaction, that the young prince turned to speak to the kaid and his party.

"Pardon me," he exclaimed, "if I seem to pay more attention to Boroon than to such honored guests."

"No excuses," interrupted the kaid. "We all know the proverb—'The condition of the steed is often the life of the rider.' Boroon deserves your care."

"He does," returned Casbin; "but that should not hinder

the politeness due from a host. You are now my guests; you have entered upon my territories; although this is somewhat of a debatable ground between yonder Sultan and myself. These ruins are mine—mine by right of conquest. The castle was built by the Romans to overawe and block up the Beni Mozarg. My ancestors were compelled to endure it for a century, when they took it, and left it as you see. Since then, neither Vandal nor Saracen has dared to attempt its restoration. It has scanty accommodations for ladies," continued the Berber, turning to Xaripha and Isabel; "and sorry I am to say, that I am afraid you will have to pass another night within it."

"Is there no danger of a visit from any of the troops below?" demanded the rais. "True, the bridge is destroyed; but is it not possible for foot soldiers to find their way across?"

"Have no apprehension. I have taken all precautions against surprise. As to a message from the emperor's camp, I expect it. Even now there is a troop of horses approaching, but they bear a white flag, and come as friends."

"Do they bring Juanita with them!" eagerly demanded Isabel.

"I hope not," replied Casbin, "poor girl! She will have had a hard night's ride if they have brought her all the way from the city. No; she may be now in the camp at El Sakel, but she can hardly be with this party who are advancing. Let us to the rampart and watch them. They must now be fully within view."

The Berber led the way to the point from which his own movements had been overlooked the day before. The party of Moorish horse were distinctly visible, but nothing like a female form could be seen.

In a short time they were within a few hundred yards of the ravine; and the Berber proposed to go out and receive them. He directed all to envelope their faces in their haicks and the hoods of their djellabeahs, so as not to be recognized, and taking the child in his arms, he led the party down the path from the ruins.

The horsemen drew rein at a little distance from the precipice. The kaid in command dismounted, and with a turban floating from a short staff, advanced to the bank. The Berber advanced on his side. The conference opened on

the part of the kaid with a profusion of salutations and compliments.

"God be praised for all his mercies!" exclaimed the kaid. "Not the least of which is that he again permits me to rest my eyes on the prince of horsemen; the hero of the Lab el Barode. May Allah hold such a rider in his right hand! And the horse—oh, fortunate owner of such a horse! Say, has he recovered his wind?"

"Boroon, the son of El Hassaneh, is well," replied the Berber?

"El Hassaneh! Oh, wonderful, incomparable, matchless animal! My ears still ring with her fame; but my eyes were never blessed with the sight of her. Will my lord tell me to which of the Kolani 'the Beautiful' traced her pedigree?"

"The ancestors of Boroon and his mother El Hassaneh had a pure stream of blood a thousand years old before the Kolani were heard of," responded the Berber, courteously, but with somewhat of impatience in his tone. But come, what news from the court? How is the Sultan (whom may God preserve!) this morning?"

"My lord the Sultan—may God lengthen his life!—is well in body, but sore troubled in mind. Never has a Sultan of Morocco had his beard so freely handled. Oh! who can paint the tempest of imperial wrath? It was terrible! more violent than the tornado! more withering than the sirocco! But God is alone all-powerful. The shereef, although a descendant of the Prophet, is but a man. He bows to the will of Allah. He submits to destiny. He honored me, his meanest slave, the veriest speck of dust in his presence, with an order to saddle and mount. He sends you his compliments. He desires to know upon what terms you will restore his heart's jewel, the young Muley Abderrhaman; and he begs that you will commit no outrage upon the boy before he can have time to treat for his ransom."

"Look!" exclaimed Casbin, leading the child to the brink of the pricipice. "See for yourself that the boy is well; and now, go,—say to your master that it would grieve me indeed to be compelled to work the child any harm. Say he has but to comply with my demands, and the pride of his old age shall be immediately restored to him."

"What is it that the lord of Boroon demands?"

"'Twas in the paper that I flung in the face of the Sultan. Did he not read it?'

"He did; but my lord the shereef thinks that the chief of the Beni Mozarg is inclined to laugh at the dirt that he has cast on the imperial beard. There was nothing in that paper but a demand for a Christian female. The Sultan despatched a messenger with orders to bring her to the camp; but he cannot believe that his child was carried off to secure the person of one Christian woman."

"Go!" interrupted Berber. "Say to your master that I ask nothing beyond the terms of that paper. Bring me the young Gaditana, and the child shall be restored. As to anything further, say to him that I will help myself with the strong arm; but that Casbin Subah wrings not a father's feelings, though that father is his greatest enemy, for the sake of plunder. Bring me the Gaditana. If she is now at the camp she can easily reach this spot long before the sun hides his face in the West. Bring her then with all speed, and, mark you, with all honor and care. By the bones of my great ancester, Genseric, if a free look lights on her person, or a foul word defiles her ear, my vengeance shall waken the wildest wail that ever went up from Mequinez!"

The look and tone accompanying these words, convinced the kaid that the speaker was in earnest. With a profusion of the usual Arabic compliments the conference was closed, and the Moor, mounting his horse, put himself at the head of his troop, and spurred down the hill at full speed; not, however, without some lingering and suspicious looks at the figure of the Berber, and the party of the rais immediately in his rear. Had the ravine been passable, the kaid and his troop would have willingly broken faith, and notwithstanding the peaceable professions of the white flag, have attempted to capture the person of the renowned mountaineer. Casbin noted their passing whispers, and their curious glances at the bridgeless gulf, and a slight sneer curled his lip as, muttering something to himself, he turned away, and, accompanied by his companions, ascended the path to the ruins of the Romi.

The day rolled leisurely away. The heat of the sun was less oppressive; the light less brilliant. There was a slight haze in the air, precursor of the rains which had already begun upon the high summits of the southern Atlas. Casbin pointed out to his companions the heavy masses of flocculent clouds, enveloping the lofty snow-covered peaks, and stretching in irregular outline down upon the wooded sides, and almost

mingling with the thousand columns of smoke that could be seen arising in all directions from plateaux and terraces, which, as usual, had been cleared by fire of stubble and weeds, in expectation of the coming rains; or from the numerous charcoal pits of the mountaineers. The commotion in the clouds, as, riven each instant by the electric fluid, they opened and closed, and rose and fell, could be distinctly seen, although the bright sunlight, reflected in various tints of glowing white from their surfaces, prevented a view of the flash. The ear, however, occasionally caught a faint sound of the distant thunder; a deep bass note that harmonized well with the shriller tone from rustling grass and waving trees; from locust and lizard, and bird and bee, and tiny insect, and man, with his flocks and his dogs, which came up in low sweet music from the plain below, or from the slopes of the surrounding hills and the immediate precincts of the ruins.

The slight haze of the atmosphere prevented a clear view of the plain of Sakel, and it was not until the sun was two or three hours past the meridian that a party of horsemen could be seen advancing at a rapid pace.

Deep and true emotion is necessarily silent. The blood forsook Isabel's cheek; she spoke not—she could hardly breathe. Xaripha was almost as much excited.

"Be not alarmed, señorita," exclaimed Casbin, in an encouraging tone, "your sister is coming. She will soon be in your arms!"

"Can you see her?" gasped Isabel.

"In a moment, señorita," replied Casbin, straining his eyes—"one moment more. Ha! yes—I see her—a female figure! A horseman on either hand—or I should have seen her before!"

Isabel burst into tears, and the rais was compelled to throw his arm around her to keep her from falling.

The Berber sprang down the pathway from the ruins to the ravine, where three or four men were engaged in re-stretching and securing the cords of the bridge. It was a simple job, after a rope had been made fast to the lower plank, to haul the pendant bridge up to its horizontal position, and unite the ends of the severed cords. Under the Berber's supervision it was well and quickly done.

As the troop of Moorish horse reached the ascending

ground, a mile or so from the ruin they slackened their pace, allowing themselves to be overtaken by a party of three or four mounted men, who had evidently ridden hard—their horses, half blown, and covered with foam and blood, giving unmistakable indications of having been freely exercised under the influence of lash and spur.

The leader of the party—a tall, ungainly-looking negro—was at once recognized as Muley Sidan, son of the Sultan and the Sultana Sidana. With a single glance at Juanita he rode up to the kaid who commanded the troop, and motioned him on in advance of his men. When beyond hearing, he turned to the kaid, and gruffly said :

"I have had a hard ride after you. Praise be to God, I am in time! This must not be. The maiden must not be given up to this Berber traitor!"

"'Tis the command of the Sultan, whose life may Allah prolong!" replied the kaid.

"I care not," replied the Prince. "My mother needs her; and when my mother needs anything, woe unto whoever stands in the way of her obtaining it."

The kaid knew the violent temper of the prince, and the power of Leilah Ajakah. He saw on the instant that it would require no little prudence and tact to steer clear between the requisitions of the Sultan and the commands of Muley Ismael.

"The daughter of the Nazarene must not be given up!" repeated the prince.

"And the young shereef, the son of our lord?" asked the kaid; "who will dare apprise the Sultan that his child has been left in the hands of the Berber?"

The prince made no reply, but with a gloomy look, he rode on by the side of the kaid.

"I am of the blood of the shereefs myself," continued the kaid; "but I should not like to be the bearer of such news. Pardon my boldness, but I doubt whether the loftiest head in the Sultan's family would sit safely on its shoulders in such a case. My head would go at any rate."

"Is there no way of getting hold of the young shereef, except by surrendering the maiden?" moodily demanded the prince.

"None," replied the kaid. "And yet, perhaps, it might be," he continued, musingly.

"How?" demanded Sidan, in a tone of impatience. "Tell me how we can recover the child and retain the maiden, and you shall name your own reward. Oh! I should so like to circumvent this Berber—this traitorous hound of the hills. Some day I will extirpate his tribe, and defile the graves of his ancestors—how, I would laugh at his beard."

"You may, perhaps, be able to do more than laugh at it," returned the kaid. "Suppose that it were in your power to spit upon it—to pull it out by the roots?"

The prince looked at the kaid inquiringly. In reply the kaid proceeded to explain that it would be, perhaps, possible, after surrendering Juanita and getting possession of the child, to make a sudden dash at the Berber, and secure him and his prize.

"Had the bridge been up," said the kaid, "I could have done it this morning. This afternoon there will be no such difficulty in the way."

"But think you that this son of a thousand burnt grandfathers will not appear in force?"

"No, not so," replied the kaid. "Look for yourself—there he is in waiting for us just beyond the ravine. There are not more than a dozen persons with him—and two of those are women. No, he trusts in this thing," continued the kaid, unrolling and exposing a white flag. "He is a fool. This maiden must have bewitched him, or he would have insisted on better terms, with the young shereef in his power. He might have emptied the *beit al mal* of every coin in it."

The kaid's allusion to the imperial treasury, the vast hoards of which the avaricious prince expected some day to inherit, suggested a reason for recovering the child which had not before occurred to Sidan. It would be bad policy indeed to leave the means of forcing money from the old doting father in the hands of the Berber, even to gratify the Sultana, and secure her ascendancy in the harem. He glanced back with a look of curiosity, but Juanita wore her haick well over her face, and he could not see her features. She, however, saw him, and her suspicions were excited by his manner of addressing the kaid. As she watched the play of their features, their excited gestures and mysterious glances, she became more and more convinced that some foul play was in contemplation.

A turn of the road permitted a sight of the bridge restored to its horizontal position. A single guard, with a long musket, stood at one end. Beyond, at some fifty paces distance, was the Berber, and grouped behind him two or three rough-looking attendants and the party from the ruins.

The plans of the prince and the kaid were quickly formed. The first was to halt with the main body of the troops at the bridge, while the kaid rode forward with Juanita, and effected the exchange. The instant he should get the child in his arms the prince was to advance with the soldiers, and recapture Juanita, and seize the Berber, or cut him down if he offered any resistance. The plan was simple, and apparently of easy execution.

With courteous and politic duplicity, the Moors drew rein at a little distance from the bridge, as if disposed to wait for some message from the other side. But the next instant they were again in motion, advancing to the brink of the ravine. The kaid, bearing the white flag, crossed the bridge, followed by Juanita, and the horsemen who rode by her side. She had scarcely, however, reached the other side, when Prince Sidan, with the remaining portion of the troop, began to pour over the bridge, despite the opposition of the single guard.

The Berber heeded not this movement, but, advancing with the young shereef, politely exchanged the usual compliments with the kaid. He then turned and assisted Juanita to dismount, As she rested in his arms for a moment, on her way to the ground, she whispered :

"Beware, Señor; there is treachery intended, I fear."

Casbin started, but made no reply. Leaving Juanita to the embrace of her sister, he turned to the kaid.

"What means this?" he demanded, gravely, but politely. "Is it necessary for your troops to pass the bridge? Do I not appear unarmed and unattended?

"By the faith of Allah!" exclaimed the kaid, "you have no cause to fear. My men are somewhat curious to see so renowned a person as the chief of the Beni Mozarg. Hand me the child, and I will soon send them across the ravine."

A sarcastic smile played around the mouth of the Berber.

"Will Muley Sidan, the son of your Sultan, give the same pledge?"

The kaid started, to find that Sidan had been recognized, but recovering himself in a moment, he called quietly to the prince to advance.

"The chief of the Mozarg fears that we meditate evil," said the kaid. "Will the son of the Sultan tell him that the eye of Allah searches the breast of a shereef, and that no treachery can be found in it?"

Muley Sidan assumed a look of extreme candor and courtesy. Placing his hand on his heart, he bowed low, smiled, and exclaimed:

"As Allah is truth, there is no guile in a shereef."

The gravity with which the Prince asserted this monstrous lie was very amusing. From the days when the fanatic founders of the family (issuing from their home in the desert) succeeded, by a course of systematic treachery and fraud, not less than by force of arms, in subverting the dynasty of the Almohades, the Shereefian family had been noted for its bad faith to friends and foes. The assertion of the Prince was eminently ridiculous; and the Berber replied by a laugh.

Sidan glared at the young man for a moment with an expression of fury. But he restrained himself until the boy should be in the arms of the kaid. Practised in the art of dissimulation, like most of his countrymen, he smoothed his features and again placed his hand upon his heart.

"Fear nothing," he exclaimed. "Pass the boy to the kaid. May my great-great-grandfather burn forever if any evil is intended."

There was something so sinister in the scowling glance of Muley Sidan, something so suspicious and threatening in the tone of his voice, that the group behind the Berber started and listened in attitudes of intense excitement for the reply. Juanita, who had her own reasons—vague ones though they were—for suspecting treachery, took a step toward the young chief, but paused in breathless expectation of what was to happen.

Casbin smiled with a peculiar meaning; but without a word, he raised the boy in his arms and handed him to the kaid. The instant the latter had secured the child in his arms, he wheeled his horse, struck spurs into him, and in a few jumps was in the rear of his troop.

There appeared to be something exceedingly comical in this rapid and suspicious movement to the eyes of the Berber.

He clapped his hands, as if applauding some dexterous feat of the Lab el Barode; his face glowed all over with the spirit of fun, and a burst of clear, ringing, heart-felt laughter struck all within hearing—Christians and Moors—with surprise. So much astonished was Muley Sidan at the sudden outbreak of pure boyish glee, that for a moment he forgot himself.

He sat still on his horse, and his eyes wandered from the Berber to the kaid, as if in search of the joke. The idea that the chief of the Beni Mozarg was half-witted occurred to him, but was at once chased from his mind by the conviction that the renowned mountaineer was making him—the son of the Sultan—an object of mirth.

A tremor of rage shook his frame, and gathering up his bridle, and spurring his horse, he shouted to the soldiers to advance.

"Dismount! Seize him—seize them all! Bind the men, while I secure these women!"

"Hold!" shouted Casbin, in a tone that made the soldiers pause, as they were flinging themselves from their saddles, and even arrested the movements of the Prince. "Hold! Not a step for your lives! Your heads are in the lion's mouth—beware how you provoke his rage!"

Casbin raised his hand. "Show yourselves, children of the Mozarg!" he shouted, in a voice that sent its clear echoes rolling along the hill-side, "show yourselves to those traitors!" and at the word the surrounding thickets seemed to be alive with men, all armed with long guns, which they pointed with one accord at the astonished Moors. They covered the rocks—they filled the road beyond the bridge—they seemed to start up from the ground in all directions.

"Fools!" exclaimed Casbin, addressing the Moors, "did you think that I was so weak, and so ignorant of Moorish character as to trust to your honor? Cowardly liars!—traitors! what hinders me from punishing your intended treachery as it deserves? But go! I leave you to the judgment of Allah, whose name you have profaned. Go! the eyes of my children ache with the sight of such faithless wretches! Go! lest they take the sword of vengeance into their own hands, when I shall be powerless to restrain them!"

Casbin waved his hand; the mountaineers fell back from the road, allowing the disconcerted horsemen to cross the

bridge and descend the slope of the hill. Muley Sidan slunk away with the rest, uttering not a word until he was beyond the reach of the Berber muskets, when his rage overflowed in a torrent of imprecations.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE sun had risen some fifteen or twenty degrees above the eastern summits of the Atlas, when our travelers having again passed a pleasant night in the ruins of the Romi, once more mounted to the saddle. Their route lay in an easterly direction, upward, through groves of oak and evergreen; along cultivated valleys, filled with villages of stone huts, and across several small plateaus and mountain slopes, covered with flocks of sheep and goats.

Every danger had passed, and a scene of perfect security opened the doors of all hearts to the influences of the grand and picturesque aspects of nature. There was not much said. Their minds were too full of delicious emotion; they were too happy to talk. The only countenance darkened by a shade of care was that of the rais. Upon first mounting, he had made an effort at gaiety, but as they proceeded on their way, his spirits seemed to sink with every step, until at length his gloomy looks began to affect Isabel, who vainly watched his face for some clue to his melancholy.

"We are near the valley of lions," exclaimed Casbin to the rais, checking his horse, and leaning back in his saddle.

The shade on Hassan's face deepened. Isabel started with alarm, and turned to him with a look of inquiry.

"Be not disturbed, señorita," replied Hassan, riding closer to her side. "There is no danger to be apprehended. The valley of lions is simply the spot that has been fixed upon as the end of—"

"Our journey!" demanded Isabel, perceiving the rais hesitate.

"Not of yours, *mi queridita*, but of mine. At this point we separate. You to go on with your sister to the castle of Casbin el Subah; I to return to my galley at Salee."

The words of Hassan fell with a stunning effect upon the

ears of Isabel. She gasped for breath, unable to utter a word in reply. Her lover pressed closer to her side, ready to afford her the support of his arm; and with many expressions of endearment exerted himself to reassure her spirits. Some little emotion Hassan had expected; and it was with a view to save her from all unnecessary excitement that he had deferred informing her, until the last moment, of the plans that had been agreed upon between himself and the Berber. But he was wholly unprepared for the degree of emotion with which his announcement had been received; or the paralyzing effect of the blow. It happened, however, for the best, inasmuch as, although the shock was at first very severe, the reaction which followed upon further explanation was proportioned to it. The spirits of the Gaditana rising with a bound from the undue depression, mounted to their original elevation upon learning that the proposed separation was to be but for a few weeks at most. Her tender and impressible nature was better able to endure the temporary absence of her lover, from having been compelled, for a moment, to contemplate the possibility of a separation from him forever.

In a few words the rais explained his plans; pointed out the necessity of leaving her for a while, to ensure some means for the ultimate escape of the whole party from the country; enlarged, in answer to her inquiries, upon the feasibility of his scheme, the little danger attending its execution, and the certainty of soon seeing her again. Absorbed in conversation on a subject so deeply interesting to them, the lovers heeded not their arrival at a beautiful little valley, until their further progress was arrested by the shouts of their companions, who had dismounted, and were grouped upon the turf around a spring of crystal water, and beneath the shade of a venerable ilex or holm oak.

A number of good-looking, bareheaded and barefooted damsels, bearing loaves of bread, hot barley cakes, fresh milk, honey, and eggs, were in attendance. Old women and children flocked from the neighboring huts; while, at a little distance, the men collected in groups, all anxious to get a sight of the famous chief. Casbin advanced to them; spoke to them, familiarly presented his hand to two or three of the oldest, and touched several sick children who were presented to him by their parents.

The morning ride and the fresh mountain air had given the

travelers, not even excepting the three maidens, a good appetite; and full justice was done to the breakfast of the mountaineers. Everything in the scene; the smiling aspect of the little valley, imbedded, as it were a dimple, in the rough and scarred cheek of old Atlas; the bright sunlight playing on rock and tree and waving grass; the cool breeze; the picturesque looks, free bearing, and respectful attitudes of the wild mountaineers, all combined to make that *al fresco* meal a gay and pleasant one. The spirits of the party reached a high degree of elevation, and even the rais, shaking off with a determined effort all feelings of sadness, joined, in his grave way, in the general hilarity.

The signal for mounting was given by the Berber. Their animals were brought up by their attendants, and each gallant hastened to assist his lady-love to her saddle. Hassan lingered long at the stirrup of Isabel, and would still have stayed, had not Casbin, who had mounted his horse, ridden up to her side and impatiently laid his hand on her bridle.

"Come, señorita," exclaimed Casbin, "I must carry you off. You are detaining this famous rover from his duty."

The rais interposed no objection, but with an emphatic pressure of her hand, he turned and sprang into the saddle. With a wave of his arm and a courteous inclination of his body almost to the saddle-bow, he wheeled his horse, and resolutely turned back, accompanied by a mounted mountaineer, on the path to the ruins of the Romi.

"You will not think me uncourteous, señorita," exclaimed Casbin, "in thus cutting short the parting speeches of so gallant a lover? The truth is, time presses, and every moment is of importance."

"How so?" demanded Juanita. "Did you not say that we have reached ground that had never been desecrated by the footsteps of a conqueror? No danger can threaten us here!"

"You are right, señorita," replied Casbin. "You need entertain no fear, and *our* time is not of much importance; but with Hassan the case is different—an hour lost to him may ruin our plans."

"Why, then, did he accompany us from the ruins of the Romi?" inquired Juniata.

"Why, señorita?" replied the Berber, with a glance at Isabel; "because love is stronger than prudence. I urged

that he should set out at once for Salee: he insisted upon going to my castle; so we compromised the matter by agreeing upon the valley of lions for parting."

"It must be urgent business," exclaimed Juanita, "that can induce him to turn back even here. Every ascent seems to open up fresh views of beauty; and at every step my heart beats with a more vigorous pulse of delight. Oh, I should dislike, indeed, to be compelled to turn back and descend."

"Not even to resume your seat on the cushions in the private patio of Leila Ajakah," said Casbin, "with the Abyssinian dancing girls posturing before you!"

Juanita raised her eyes with an expression of surprise to the face of the Berber. In talking over her adventures after being carried off by the officers of the Sultana, nothing had been said, on her part, of the dancing girls or, on the part of Casbin, in relation to his visit to the harem.

The Berber answered her puzzled look with a smile.

"Not even," he continued, "if you could hear the castanets and tambourines of those black Soudan damsels, or taste the sweetmeats presented by that old waddling Smyrnariot."

Juanita started, and an expression of increasing wonder mantled her face.

"The Moors are right," she exclaimed. "I think you deal in magic, else how could you know so accurately the character and country of the slaves who tired me to death in their attempts to amuse me."

"It needed no art of magic to inform me," replied Casbin. "I saw you with my own eyes."

"You, señor," questioned Juanita, in a tone of astonishment.

"At your service, señorita," replied the young man, bowing and laughing gaily. "Did you think that no eye was watching over you? Did you think that I could content myself with my preparations for securing a fitting hostage for your safe return? Did you imagine that I could sleep without having seen, with my own eyes, how so wild and free a bird looked in its gilded captivity? And well indeed, señorita, did you bear yourself. I marked your composed mien; your calm and courageous smile, and your abstracted air. Tell me, Juanita, what occupied your thoughts at that

moment, when, with a gesture of command, you waved aside the dancing girls, and starting up from your cushions, paced the marble court."

Juanita glanced at the Berber with a look of peculiar meaning, which spoke far more than in words she would have been willing to avow. She smiled, blushed, but made no reply.

Casbin understood the look, but with lover-like perversity he chose to misinterpret it.

"Oh, I see, señorita," he exclaimed, "you were thinking of the terraces of the Guadelete, and the balconies and alamedas of Cadiz. Well, wait but a little, and you shall see them once more. If the rais succeeds in his part of the enterprise, a few days at most will restore you to the delights of Andalusia.

"A few days, señor," replied Juanita, with something of pique in her tone. She was going on with an ironical congratulation upon the lightness of the tax upon the hospitality of his kassir, that in that case they should inflict; but a recollection of the service that, upon two occasions, he had rendered her, drove from her mind all disposition to retort the affected carelessness of his speech. She felt a sense of humility creeping upon her; a disposition to submit even to caprice and misinterpretation; a desire to be in some degree tyrannized over; to suffer anything rather than indifference and separation.

"A few days!" she exclaimed again, but in a different tone.

"A few days, señorita,; perchance, however, a few weeks. Think you that the time will seem too long?"

"Oh, no," replied Juanita. "I should not mind spending months amid such scenes as this."

"Months, Juanita, but not years! For awhile you would enjoy the grandeur of our mountain peaks, the sublimity of our Winter storms, or the refreshing coolness of our Summer breezes—the beauty of our valleys, or the wild freedom of our people. For months, perhaps; but in the end you would tire of them, and long for more familiar scenes and more congenial manners. Oh, no, señorita, you could not endure our Berber life for years!"

The young man pressed closer to Juanita's side, and, dropping his voice to the low key of deep and tender feeling, looked inquiringly into her eyes. The path had

grown more rugged. Her mule stumbled; but the ready arm of the Berber seized the bridle, and prevented him from falling.

"How is it," said Juanita, as her beast recovered his footing, "that you can endure what you think would be so distasteful to me?"

"Oh, señorita," replied Casbin, "the case is very different. We are the creatures of the nature amid which we have been bred. I was born amid these mountains; there snowy summits, their awful precipices, their foaming cataracts; their dark valleys and forests, enter into my mental and physical composition—they are part of me. Besides, I have objects worthy of a life-struggle to attain, and that can only be attained by work, night and day, amid my own countrymen. God gave me, señorita, a father, who had emancipated himself from the prejudice and ignorance of his people. He saw that the elements of a great nation abounded among us; but that, like the precious ores of our mountains, they were lying, as they had lain for centuries upon centuries, neglected and useless. He anxiously sought for some means to combine these elements—to infuse among them the principle of an active moving vitality—to leaven them with the desire for growth and improvement. But, alas! he died! leaving for me, as his richest legacy, the solution of the problem that puzzled him. With such an object ever before me—with such a purpose ever swaying me—I, señorita, could dwell nowhere else but amid these mountains; but you! oh, you, Juanita! have no such relations to these scenes—you could never be content with such a life!"

It was an embarrassing moment for Juanita. Could she have spoken as her heart dictated, she would have energetically expressed her belief in her power to dwell contentedly, not only for years, but forever among the Berbers; she would have said that love alone was an object sufficient to induce any sacrifice; she would have asserted the possibility of making the young man's purposes her purposes; of entering into his plans of civilization and conquest; of participating in his pleasures and labors, his hopes and his fears. But there was nothing in the Berber's tone or words that would fully warrant such a confession of her thoughts and feelings; and there was too strong a principle of honesty and directness in her character; too deep a depth of pure and simple

feeling, to permit a resort to the usual feminine resource, the light jesting reply of affected carelessness. She said nothing; but with a frank, fearless glance, raised her eyes from the ground, and directed them upon Casbin's face.

On his part, the Berber chief was equally embarrassed with doubt. He knew that he loved. He knew that he was loved in return. But still it was a question with him whether he ought to propose to Juanita to become his bride; whether it would be wise to separate her, should she consent to it, from her sister; to tear her away from country and friends; to undertake to naturalize an offshoot of European civilization amid the barbarism of the Atlas. Would the experiment be successful, even if she submitted to it willingly?

The profound ambition of the young man, assiduously cultivated by his father, who had himself fancied that he was called upon to re-create the empire of Genseric, an ambition that had been confirmed by a visit to the remains of former Berber power, together with his position as chief of a tribe always at variance with powerful enemies, had rendered him prudent and cautious beyond his years. No present gratification of passion or fancy had power to influence his judgment. He felt the responsibility that rested upon him; the responsibility of deciding, as well for Juanita as for himself, and with an expression of doubt he returned the maiden's glance. Further conversation, however, was cut short by the presence of the rest of the party, who, as the road became more winding, were compelled to quicken their pace, and to close up, in order to keep their leader in sight.

Their path now lay up a narrow and steep ascent, with frowning precipices on either side, crowned with pines and evergreen oaks. The top of this pass opened upon a wide and level plateau, to which it furnished the only means of access.

A magnificent prospect broke upon the travelers as their staggering but sure-footed animals cleared the jagged bed of the rocky ravine, and sprang up to the open plain. On one hand they could look back upon every foot of ground which they had passed. Below them lay the ruins of the Romi, and further on, the plain and city of Mequinez, while in every other direction stretched a billowy sea of mountains, wave above wave, until the last snow-crested summits were mingled with the clear blue of ether, or concealed amid the masses of fleecy clouds.

The surface of the plateau was dotted with numerous stone houses with thatched roofs. Here and there the ground was divided by hedge rows, into gardens. The open ground was covered by herds of cattle and flocks of sheep. Surmounting a gentle elevation was an irregular building of great size and of considerable architectural pretension. It was built of stone, and inclosed an immense court, the entrance to which was through a matchicolated gateway. The walls were flanked by towers at the angles, and surrounding the whole was a deep moat. Within, distinct pavilions, connected by terraces and latticed corridors, surrounded the court, and divided into smaller squares and more secluded patios the space between their outer faces and the casemented ramparts and battlements.

Upon the appearance of the travelers upon the plateau, a small culverin was discharged from one of the towers; the great gate of the *oerdj*, or kassir, was thrown open; the drawbridge lowered; and issuing from the court appeared a body of five hundred horsemen. With trumpets sounding, pennons flying, and guns whirling in the air, they came on at full speed, uttering loud shouts. They halted, wheeled, divided into several bodies, rode up on either side, discharged their long guns, and compelled their horses to the most violent and extravagant action.

As the cavalcade advanced, crowds of women and children showed themselves at every point from which they could obtain a view; and Juanita noted with some surprise, but more pleasure, that it was not curiosity in relation to the new comers alone that actuated them. They seemed most anxious to see, and greet with shouts of welcome, their beloved Amekran.

In half-an-hour the party arrived at the drawbridge of the castle. Casbin here struck spurs into his horse, dashed across the bridge, and sprang to the ground beneath the arched gateway. Throwing aside his cap and turban, and letting his yellow hair fall in thick masses about his face, he turned to the advancing travelers and gravely saluted them.

"The Amekranelarsh of the Beni Mozarg," he exclaimed, "gives you welcome to his kassir."

CHAPTER XXXV.

UNDER the guidance of the mountaineer who accompanied him, Hassan rapidly retraced the path that led to the ruins of the Romi, and descending thence, reached by nightfall a douah within a few miles of Mequinez.

His guide called the sheik aside, and spoke a few words in his ear. The sheik expressed his willingness to comply with any requisition from the chief of the Mozarg, and, turning to Hassan, promised him a fresh horse in the morning, and a guide who would conduct him by a safe path around the city, and put him into the main road to Salee.

Hassan retired to the single tent always placed in the centre of a douah, and which serves, in place of a mosque, for religious services, as well as for the shelter of the traveler who claims the hospitality of the tribe. Food in profusion was brought to him, and the old men of the douah collecting in a circle around the door of the tent, disposed themselves for a talk. The Moors are fond of gossip, and as they had no newspapers in those days (in which particular they are no better off now), their only means for satisfying a laudable thirst for information in relation to the latest news was to question the passing stranger.

Hassan, however, was rather taciturn, and besides, coming from the hills, he had nothing to communicate except that the famous Amekran was safe and in good health. On their part, however, his entertainers were full of stories of the recent Lab el Barode. Hassan listened with interest, occasionally picking out the truth, by a question, from amid the ridiculous exaggerations which had already got abroad.

Early in the morning he was aroused by the sheik. A fresh horse stood waiting for him at the door of the tent. His new guide was already mounted, and prepared to start; and Hassan, bidding his host adieu with the usual compliments and wishes for safety and happiness, set forth from the douah.

The barb in Morocco is never trained for traveling—the Moors knowing no medium between a walk and a gallop. Hassan, however, was a good horseman; and in his impatience to reach Salee, he contrived to make his beast get over the ground at a rapid pace, and yet preserve his wind and strength. At sunrise he was nearly abreast of Mequinez. At noon he had left the turrets of the capital many miles behind him. A few moments he stopped by the banks of a small stream, to bait his horse from a bag of barley carried at his saddle-bow; and again he mounted, and pressed on. But towards night-fall he found that his horse could go no further. To endeavor to exchange him for another, at some of the douahs in sight, he knew would take more time than he could spare, as he was resolved to reach Salee that night. Hassan did not pause long to make up his mind. With characteristic readiness he sprang to the ground, led his horse to a secluded spot, and placing the barley before him, took off the saddle and bridle, and threw them into the bushes.

"You will not wander from this spot to-night," he said, addressing his steed. "In the morning I will send for you; and in the meantime we must trust to fortune, and to the honesty of our neighbors."

Hassan turned his face in the direction of the setting sun, and, with a rapid and vigorous step walked forward. As he ascended a little eminence commanding a wide horizon, he saw the arches of the old aqueduct we have mentioned as still existing in the neighborhood of Salee, drawn clearly and distinctly upon the glowing western sky. Two hours later he was standing beneath them; and still an hour later he had crossed the wide table of rock stretching to the walls of the city, and passing round by the moat, reached the sandy beach in front of the water-gate.

There were a number of vessels lying in the stream, and others drawn up on the shore. A few Moorish guards were moving lazily about among groups of sailors and Bedouins, who were bivouacking for the night on the sand. The gates were closed, as were those of the opposite city of Rabat, but the hum of life still rose from within, and floated on the air over the stillness of the river.

The rover recognized his galley among the vessels drawn up on the sand. All was dark and quiet on board of her. He climbed up her side, and, crossing her deck, entered

the cabin, the door of which stood ajar. The noise of his footsteps awakened Selim, who, starting up, recognized the first tones of his master's voice.

Hassan bade him to strike a light, and then proceeded to question him as to the condition of the galley and crew.

"The men," replied Selim, "are all anxiously expecting your return. They have spent their last *mouzouma*, and are now ready for another cruise."

"And what do people say of my stay in Mequinez?" demanded Hassan.

"There is some wonder at your remaining so long," replied Selim; "but they think that it is the favor of the Sultan which detains you."

"Is nothing said of my brother?"

"Nothing" said Selim. "No one seems to have heard anything about him."

"And how of my flight from the city with the kaid of the gates?" asked Hassan. "Have you visited the baths and coffee-houses, as I ordered?"

"This evening I have been the rounds of the city, and not a word of reproach could I gather against the name of Hassan Herach. Nothing is known that my lord would wish to have unknown; and he can sleep without fear."

The rais felt his mind relieved from the weight of apprehension as he listened to the assurances of the trusty Selim. He had feared that orders might have been despatched from the court to prevent his leaving the port, or that at least rumors of his collusion with the Berber and Abdallah might have reached Salee, and that he should be obliged to encounter the suspicions of the citizens and authorities. He was well pleased, therefore, to find that he should meet with no difficulty in manning his galley, and that no objections would be made to his putting to sea. Hassan retired to his couch, and if, despite the fatigue of his journey, his meditations kept him awake during the greater portion of the night, his relations to the citizens and authorities of Salce had but little to do with it.

Morning came, and brought with it to the inhabitants of that nest of pirates the announcement that the famous rover had returned, and was about to get his galley ready for sea. The excitement was intense. The whole town flocked to the beach to see the man who had faced the Sultan in his mes-

hourah, and had come off unharmed. His former feats were forgotten in the greater glory of his recent achievements at the court. The authorities of the town rushed to tender their compliments and services to one who had been honored by a present of the imperial haick—one who had, as it was supposed, influence enough to procure the punishment of the saintly kaid of the slaves, and who, if offended, might see fit to bring some of the same influence to bear upon themselves.

Hassan was offered the choice of all the slaves in the bagnios for the oar—a privilege of which he availed himself to pick out a full complement, composed of English, Danes, Swedes and Hollanders. His preference for the inhabitants of the northern part of Europe was noted at the time, and commented on as affording indications of a long northern cruise. It was also noted, but without exciting any suspicion as to his motives, that although he could have shipped as large a crew as the size of the galley would admit, he contented himself with less than half the usual number of men, and those not the best that offered themselves.

The energy with which Hassan pushed forward his preparations prevailed over the usual dilatory and procrastinating habits of the Moors; and in less than a week from the time of his return, the galley was thoroughly overhauled and the damage she had suffered in the late action repaired. She was caulked; furnished with new yards and rigging, and her cabin fitted up with a degree of luxury that had never before been known. Her provisions and ammunition were got in; her slaves brought on board and chained; and at high tide she was hauled out from the sand into the stream.

The impatience of the rover would not allow him to lose a single tide, and to the astonishment of the thousands thronging the beach and covering the battlements and roofs of the two cities, the sweeps were put out, and the galley pressed for the bar, over which she passed, although the water was falling, without touching, under the skilful guidance of her commander. As soon as she was clear of the breakers, her oars were taken from the water, her lateen yard hoisted, and away she danced before the favoring wind, leaving conjecture as to the objects of the cruise busy behind her.

From the port of Salee to the mouth of the Straits of Gibraltar is a distance of about one hundred and fifty miles. Light but favorable winds enabled the galley to run this

distance, despite the strong current that generally sets adown the African coast, in less than two days. Upon rounding Cape Spartel, however, the wind changed, and blew strongly from the east. To work into the Straits, it was necessary to get out the sweeps; and after some hours' hard labor the galley was abreast of Tangier. Hassan gladly availed himself of the excuse offered by the wind to run in and anchor behind the ruins of the magnificent mole, which was blown up by the English when, in the time of Charles II., the town was abandoned by them. An opportunity was thus offered him to dispatch another message to the Berber, informing him of his having succeeded, without hindrance or suspicion, in getting his galley to sea.

As soon as the wind changed, the galley got again under way, and stood to the east toward the Mediterranean, thus disappointing the predictions of her officers and men as to her North Atlantic destination. She crept along the African shore, passing Ceuta—then, as now, a Spanish port of strength—and entering the Mediterranean, followed the sudden bend of the coast for some twenty or thirty miles, until she reached the port of the flourishing town of Tetuan.

The town itself lay at a distance of three or four miles from the shore and only a single building, for the officers of the customs, indicated the port. There were no batteries that could be brought to bear upon the galley, and no means in the power of the authorities by which they could control her freedom of movement. Hassan ordered the anchor to be dropped and, to the great astonishment of his crew, announced his intention of remaining thus at rest for several days. A pause of which we will take advantage to say a few words in relation to the configurations of the principal geographical feature of Morocco—the Atlas.

But little is known of the great mountain chain that goes by this name, particularly the loftier portions of it belonging to Morocco, from the direct observation of Christian travelers. In Algiers, the French are daily improving in a knowledge of it, but nothing can be expected from them beyond the boundaries of their own province. By the ancients the Atlas was probably better understood than it is at the present day. Suetonius Paulinus first crossed it, and after him several Roman captains; and military stations were established on some of the plateaus; but we are little better for the knowledge

thus derived. On two or three occasions the range has been crossed by travelers in modern times. As for instance, by Caillie, in his route from Timbuctoo, through Tafilet to Fez; and by Jackson, in traversing one of the two lofty and dangerous passes, Belaven and Bebavan, through which run the roads from Soos to Morocco. From these scanty sources; from the observations and speculations of writers who had an opportunity of seeing the Atlas only from a distance; and from the reports of the natives, who are themselves grossly ignorant of the extent and configuration of the whole system, with its numerous offsets and lateral ranges, our whole knowledge is derived. A few facts are, however, pretty well ascertained, such as the general direction of the great chain, and its great elevation; but in regard to the smaller ranges and spurs, except that range running between the Great Atlas and the shores of the Mediterranean, known as the Little Atlas, the statements are so contradictory that no confidence can be placed in them. No two maps, unless the one has been copied from the other, coincide. No two geographers agree in any clear and consistent description. If the reader, however, will bear in mind the general shape of the Northwestern corner of Africa, we will try to convey an idea sufficiently definite for our purposes.

The Atlantic coast of Morocco runs Northerly from the Desert to Cape Spartel. The Mediterranean coast of Barbary runs nearly East and West—the two meeting at the Straits of Gibraltar, and forming nearly a right angle. On the shores of the Atlantic, just below Mogadore, some three hundred and fifty or sixty miles below the Straits, commences the great ridge of the Atlas. For about one hundred and fifty miles it runs due East, directly in from the coast, until it reaches the city of Morocco, around which it curves at the distance of a few leagues, and assumes a Northerly direction. Here occur some of the highest peaks. Thirty miles Southeast of the city is the Miltsen, which Lieutenant Washington found, upon measurement, to be 14,400 feet in height; further on the course of the range are several higher summits, estimated by Ali Bey and Graberg de Hemson to be 15,000 feet above the level of the sea.

Having fairly rounded the city of Morocco, the range runs nearly due North, and parallel with the Atlantic coast, until it reaches to within about one hundred and fifty miles of the

Mediterranean, when it bifurcates, one prong curving to the Northeast, and reaching that sea at the Cape of Tres Forces, near the town of Milella; the other curves to the West, and terminates in the Djebel d'Azute, or Apes Hill, on the Straits of Gibraltar. The first we will consider the proper continuation of the great range, in which case its line of direction will describe a graceful-shaped curve from Cape Geer on the Atlantic, to Milella on the Mediterranean. The other will then be an offset of the main chain. It must be observed, however, that geographers do not allow the title of Great Atlas to be continued to the Northeasterly curve terminating at Milella. This honor is given to another range, which runs due East, through the provinces of Algiers and Tunis. A parallel range, called the Little Atlas, runs between it and the Mediterranean. How and where the range of the Great Atlas connects with the chain of the high Atlas of Morocco is not very well ascertained. It has been supposed, that shortly after passing the city of Morocco, the line of high summits turns off due East, and becomes the Great Atlas of Algiers and Tunis. But it is probable that the continuity of the two crests is broken by the interposition of smaller ranges, and by the Desert of Angad—a district of whose geography very little is known.

On either side of the higher ranges are numerous smaller ones, besides many irregular offsets and spurs; so that the whole system occupies an estimated extent of five hundred thousand square miles—an area equal to France, Germany and Italy combined.

In form the Atlas differs very much from the Alps. The crests are more round and regular, and there is a striking tendency to the formation of plateaus and terraces upon the slopes. This conformation renders the Atlas much better fitted for the support of a numerous population.

But it is not our purpose to detain the reader with a complete description of the Atlas, and we will return to the only fact that is of any real importance to our story—the bifurcation of the high range of Morocco, in the latitude of Salee, and the sweeping around Fez and Mequinez, and down to the Straits of Gibraltar, of one of the offsets. The town of Tetuan, situated just within the straits, lies at the foot of these hills, and in the immediate neighborhood of Errcef—a district inhabited by a pure Berber population. From this point communication could be had with the Beni Mozarg, without

leaving the hills, or without being compelled to cross any district inhabited by Arabs or Moors. This port had been selected, therefore, by the Berber and the rais as the safest point of embarkation for the sisters. It had been arranged that the latter should bring his galley around into the Mediterranean, and lie in wait at this spot, ready to receive them, while the former should undertake to escort them, under cover of the hills, and through a Berber population to the coast. It was in accordance with this plan, which had been settled in a long conference during the last night at the ruins of the Romi, that Hassan was now at anchor off the mouth of the Kheus, a little river forming the port of Tetuan.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

LEAVING Hassan in his secure and well chosen position at the foot of the Reefean mountains, we will return for awhile to the kassir; or *berdj*, of Casbin Subah.

And what shall we say? What shall we leave unsaid? What can we do with a party of contented and happy lovers under such circumstances? Describe every movement, thought, and feeling? Give every phrase of compliment—every expression of passion? Dwell upon looks, tones and sentiments? Luckily, ours is not a story of drawing-room life. Such details are not necessary to swell a page or to elaborate a plot; and we can, therefore, leave much that passed during that happy and uneventful week to the imagination of the reader.

Isabel, alone, of all the party, had any drawback upon her happiness; the absence of the rais she felt had left for awhile a blank space in her existence; a blank, however, which she managed partly to fill with many a fond regret, many a tender emotion, and many a loving hope and prayer. Not that she was at all melancholy or dispirited, or incapable of sharing the pleasures of her companions. Though feminine and affectionate in her character, she was far

from being weak, and there was nothing in a temperory separation from her lover that would have caused or excused any marked depression of spirits. She could not but feel somewhat of exhilaration arising from a sense of perfect safety after so long a subjection to the tyranny of fear. She could not but participate in the enjoyment of her sister and Xaripha. She could not but feel the influence of the mountain scenery in which she found herself. But could Hassan have been at her side! Oh, how much more intense every sentiment and emotion! As it was, time passed her pleasantly, but so leisurely, that she could count the plumes in his pinions. Had Hassan been there, time had passed her so swiftly that she would not have seen him at all. Nor have seen him any more than did Xaripha. who, in truth, could see nothing except Edward Carlyle. Luckily, Edward was equally blind, or rather similarly one-sighted, and found all his powers of vision exhausted on the object of his affections.

This state of affairs left Juanita and the Berber very much to themselves, affording him an opportunity of studying more closely the character of the young girl, and of gradually dissipating those prudential objections, or rather reasons of State, as they would have been called in the parlance of European courts, whlch offered themselves at first to the decisions of his fancy! Not that the young chief was hampered by the necessity of consulting the opinions of any one but himself. His amgars and wise men bowed to his will in all things. Unlike the Moors, or even their neighbors of the surrounding tribes, the Mozarg held women in the highest esteem. Under the influence of their early Christian training, they looked upon the marriage relation as sacred, and prided themselves upon being the strictest monogamists. Their prince could have but one wife, and they were not unwilling that he should choose her for himself. Their only anxiety was lest he should not marry at all, in which case, as Casbin was the only survivor of his family, the tribes would be left without a legitimate Amekranelarsh. The inevitable consequences of which would be a division of the tribe into families, under independent amgars, and a never-ending succession of strifes and bloodshed, where now all was union and peace.

The closer the study of the young girl's character was pursued, the stronger grew Casbin's conviction that the decisions of his fancy and affection were fully supported by the calmest

judgment that he could bring to bear upon the subject. And as this conviction grew his manner changed. The sprightly affectations of gallantry were laid aside. The boyish impetuosity and impertinence with which he had tried her character, and at times her temper, were repressed. His bearing became earnest and profoundly respectful. And this change of external manner corresponded to a similar change within. The soul of the Berber glowed with a new feeling, a profounder sentiment, a loftier passion, the instant that the objections interposed by reason and prudence had been dissipated. Before that he had kept his feelings in subjection; he loved Juanita from the first, but not with his whole heart—not that he sought to resist her influence; to bind himself to the charms of her free, unaffected and spirited manner; to avert his eyes from the dazzling glare of her beauty. He had restrained his passion rather by the exercise upon himself of his own will. He knew that he could not afford to give the reins to passion, and let loose his whole nature without being sure in every particular of his ground. Frequently the exercise of this kind of prudential control over the feelings indicates that the feelings are not very strong; but in Casbin the case was different; he understood the wants and the capacities of his own heart. He was introspective by habit and nature; he looked into himself as one looks into the crater of a volcano, and he was afraid—afraid of the elements ready for eruption within. Instinctively he knew that if he suffered the lava of passion to become thoroughly heated, its course must be smooth and true, or the wildest and widest desolation would follow in its track.

The weather continued fair, although around the high peaks of the Atlas the clouds began to gather more thickly, and the upper strata of the air were frequently streaked with feathery films of vapor. The bracing air invited to exercise, and each day excursions were made to points of interest. Now to some secluded valley, some picturesque waterfall, some lofty peak, or some haunted cavern; and now to some village of the Mozarg, or to some remains of former Berber power.

The courts and halls of the *beraj* presented scenes of continued festivity and bustle. In addition to the usual servants and guards of the castle, there were assembled a large number of soldiers—some mounted and some on foot—huntsmen with

packs of tall, strong boar-hounds; musicians and story-tellers; jugglers and serpent charmers; traveling artisans with their rude instruments and tools, and Jew pedlers with fabrics of Moorish and European manufacture; and, mingling with these, were crowds of good-looking dames and damsels in their picturesque, although somewhat scanty, costume. Duputations, composed of Amgars from the Beni Gurin, the Guernid, the Razin, the Timor, the Yeder, were in attendance, together with representations of the slender-framed Shelloch of the Southern Atlas, and the dark scowling Kabyle of Algiers and Tunis.

Isabel did not ride very boldly, and Xaripha could trust herself only to the slow paces of a steady mule, but Juanita, mounted on Boroon, scoured the country in all directions, very much to the admiration of the mountaineers, among whom a diversity of opinion obtained, as to whether she was a European angel, a Moorish djin, or one of their own mountain spirits.

Under the greenwood tree has ever been a favorite spot for the conferences of lovers; and, as may be supposed, Casbin improved his frequent opportunities. He said nothing of his passion, but he exerted himself to enlighten Juanita on all those points that could influence her final decision. He unfolded himself, his plans, and his hopes. He told her of the peculiar circumstances of parentage and education that had made him what he was. He represented distinctly the wide interval that separated himself from the most cultivated of his tribe, and the still wider interval that separated his tribe from the more barbarous tribes surrounding them. He let her see clearly that if she decided to connect her fate with his, that to him alone could she look for sympathy and companionship. Casbin intended to be just and generous, without thinking for a moment that, with such a character as Juanita, he was taking the most effective way of enlisting and exciting to the utmost every feeling of her heart.

Juanita was returning to the kassir at the close of a day spent in hunting the wild boar. Casbin was by her side. In the course of the day the beaters had aroused a "father of tusks;" and in the pursuit, Isabel and Xaripha had been left far behind. The monster, after fighting his way for miles, killing a number of dogs, and desperately wounding several horses and men, at length encountered the spear of the young

chief, and received the dexterous and vigorous thrust in his heart.

The sun was near the horizon, the deep shadows of the valleys contrasted beautifully with the golden glow of the sunlit summits; the air was clear, and the sounds of horns blown in triumph by the huntsmen, the barking and yelping of dogs, and the shouts of the mountaineers, floated in joyous chorus upon it. The heart of the young girl swelled with a sense of intense enjoyment. In many cases, the mere feeling of life—healthy, vigorous life—affords the most exquisite pleasure. If to this is added the delights of natural beauty and the exhilaration of satisfied love, the highest degree of happiness that this world can know is attained.

But as a swift, smooth current needs some obstacle of rock or bank to indicate its force and rapidity, so does the current of happiness require occasionally some slight interruption to show how deep and swift the flow. Juanita might not have known how happy she was, had it not been for an announcement that a Reefean had arrived from Tangier, and wished to speak with the Berber chief.

"Bid him approach," replied Casbin. "This must be," he continued, turning to Juanita, "a messenger from the rais. Let us dismount, señorita, and receive it. Here, seat yourself upon this bank of earth, where through yon glade you get a view of the golden-crowned head of the king of the Atlas."

In a few minutes a wild, dark-looking Berber, from the neighborhood of Tetuan, advanced, and amid a profusion of compliments and expressions of respect, drew from his girdle a letter.

Satisfying himself that the man was a bearer of no verbal message, Casbin committed him to the charge of an officer, with orders to provide for his entertainment; and then, when all had departed, deliberately proceeded to open the note. Its contents consisted of only a few words in Spanish, apprising the Berber that the writer had succeeded in getting his vessel to sea, and that in a day or two he should be at anchor off Tetuan, with every preparation made for the consummation of their scheme.

The Berber, without a word, handed the note to his companion.

"When shall we set out to meet him?" demanded Juanita.

"To-morrow morning."

"And the roads that we shall pursue are safe?"

"Perfectly so, senorita. My presence will secure you from all danger. But, Juanita, you do not seem to be as elated at the receipt of this good news as one might expect."

The young girl made no reply. Her eyes were fixed upon the ground, and a tear trembled between the long black lashes. She stirred not as the Berber, moving closer to her side, passed his arm around her waist, and drew her to him.

"Juanita," he whispered, "dearest Juanita, will you stay with me? Will you leave your sister? Will you make this rude country your home? Will you be my wife?"

"Your wife!" exclaimed Juanita, starting, and glancing up with a look of passionate fondness. But again her eyes fell, and a shade of anxiety crossed her face.

"Yes, my wife!" replied Casbin. "Nay, Juanita, I know your thought. You think that on this side of the Straits the marriage relation is a loose and an indefinite one. But you forget that we are not the followers of El Islam. We are Christians; and a plurality of wives is as strictly forbidden by the customs of the Beni Mozarg as in your own Spain. But were it not so, hear me swear that I should ever remain faithful to you, and to you alone. 'Tis not from mere fancy or passion that I ask you. Deeply, devotedly as I now love you, I have other reasons for making you my wife. I have told you, Juanita, how my boyish ambition was first fired by the story of Iskandar, who had hardly attained manhood when he had conquered a world. But did I tell you how I resolved to make him a warning, as well as an example? How that, inasmuch as mine is a harder task, having to create many of the elements of empire, I resolved to make my passions and affections the veriest slaves of my will? In this I have succeeded; and I can boldly say I never should have loved you as I do, or that loving you, I never should have dared to press you to this point, were it not that I am urged to it by a conviction of duty to my cause and my people. Juanita, I have need of you. The civilization of my tribe—perhaps of the Atlas—perhaps of the whole of Barbary—has need of you. Juanita, you must submit to that destiny which links your fate to mine."

The young girl made no reply. There was one question she longed to ask, but how to put it she knew not.

"Do you hesitate?" exclaimed Casbin. "'Tis useless—you love me—you know, Juanita, that you love me—you—"

"Oh, it is not that," said Juanita. "I love you, I am afraid, too well; but, señor, in my country, a sacrament of the Church alone consecrates a union like the one you propose."

"Ha! is that the difficulty?" replied the Berber, gaily. "Luckily, 'tis one easily removed; we will have ring, book and priest. But I pardon your suspicions, Juanita, and I honor your scruples, they are natural; and if you were dealing with one of your haughty, proud, pure-blooded *hidalgos*, they would be most probably just. Here, however, in the mountains, if we are lacking in some of the refinements of European civilization, we are also free from some of the vices. You will believe me, Juanita, when I say, that I should scorn myself if I could by word or deed deceive you. Had I not proved you pure of soul—had I found reason to think you as light-o'-love as many of your countrywomen, I might have sought you on other terms, but never by treachery or falsehood. Banish your doubts, then, Juanita, we will be married all in due form by one of the Fathers of the Redemption at Tetuan. They will be satisfied with my Christianity. In Spain I might have some difficult questions to answer; but here they will never stop to inquire whether I am a true son of the Church or not."

"And Isabel! poor Isabel!" murmured Juanita. "What will become of her?"

"Why poor Isabel?" replied Casbin. "She will marry Hassan, and be none the less content to go with him to England, than you are to remain here with me. But see, the sun is kissing those blushing clouds good night; we must mount and gallop to reach home before twilight fades; and you have become, dearest Juanita, too precious a charge to be trusted even to Boroon, in the darkness."

The short twilight lasted until the lovers reached the kassir, on the drawbridge of which Isabel and Xaripha, with Abdallah and Edward, stood waiting. Supper was served in the great hall of the principal pavilion, a long and lofty room open to the roof, which was composed of heavy rafters, carved and painted in brilliant colors, and on the outside covered with tiles of sun-baked clay. At the upper end of the room the floor was raised a foot or two above the level of the rest of the apartment, and over this raised portion was suspended a canopy of red silk. Beneath this canopy Casbin sat with

his guests, while the rest of the hall below was occupied by his officers and courtiers. Those highest in rank sat, some upon carpets, and some upon skins, nearest to the upper end of the room; while those of inferior degree crowded still farther down upon the bare stone floor. Slaves, bearing large loaves of bread and huge dishes of baked meats, entered and deposited their burthens before the hungry guests, who with little ceremony fell to, very much in the Moorish style, with the exception, that in addition to the fingers, a wooden spoon appeared to be more generally in use.

Supper finished, Casbin communicated the message of the rais, when, after a short consultation, it was resolved to set out without delay for the coast. Horses and mules, guards and attendants, were ordered to be ready at break of day, and the maidens retired to their couches to prepare for an early start.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

FIVE or six days followed, during which the travelers pursued their devious way through the mountains. Carefully avoiding those districts inhabited by tribes with whom his influence was doubtful, Casbin led his companions through some of the most romantic and beautiful scenery of the Atlas. The people, as they passed, although in general bigoted followers of Islam, treated them respectfully, and received them into their villages and douahs with every mark of consideration and kindness. Their progress was slow, from the necessity of frequent conferences with the Amgars, or wise men of the tribes, who would still believe, de pite Casbin's assuranees to the contrary, that his journey had some grand political object—the extirpation of the Arabs and Turks from Barbary, at least; if not the reconquest of Spain and the establishment of Berber dominion in all Europe.

Emerging from a gorge in the hills, the travelers came out on to a little plateau, from which they could look down upon the Mediterranean, lying almost at their feet. Away to the West stretched the undulating line of coast toward the bold promontory of Tres Forces. To the left, and at the distance

of only three or four miles, lay the town of Tetuan, and, directly in front, its open roadstead, where quietly at anchor floated the galley of the rais.

The level ground of the plateau was covered with ruins. Fragments of columns, arches and walls, were scattered around, partly buried in the earth, and partly concealed by bushes and vines. A small roofless building, but with walls in good preservation, alone remained. This building bore evidences in its shape of having been a Christian church, and such, Casbin asserted, it was well known to be both from history and tradition. A few wretched Berbers had erected their stone huts against the walls, but a certain traditionary respect for the sanctity of the spot had kept them from invading the interior.

In front of this church or chapel the Berber ordered the ground to be cleared, and the tents pitched. He also directed three separate piles of green branches to be prepared and fired; and soon as many tall columns of smoke arose from the edge of the plateau. Selecting the most active and intelligent looking man from the squalid population living amid the ruins, he dispatched him to the beach, with directions that he should watch for a boat from the galley, and offer his services as a guide up the mountain to whatsoever it should bring ashore.

While Casbin was thus employed, Juanita and Xaripha, accompanied by Edward, amused themselves in an examination of the ruins. Isabel found more pleasant occupation in gazing down upon the galley of her lover. Seated upon a fallen column, she had a long conversation with Abdallah, who could ill conceal his anxiety in regard to the next step of their journey. He knew the scheme of the rais; but much he feared that something would occur to prevent its execution. He hardly dared trust the hope of escape, now that the prospect of it was so near at hand.

And Hassan! How was he employed, while thus the subject of conversation—almost of observation—to the Gaditana and the Moor? He was listlessly pacing the deck of his galley, occasionally stopping in his walk, raising his eyes to the slopes of the hills, and letting them rest with a long and anxious glance upon the white walls of the ruined chapel.

For three or four days he had remained at anchor waiting and watching in vain for the signal that had been agreed upon

between himself and the Berber. The wind was fair, the weather pleasant, and this unusual delay caused some talk among the officers and crew, but Hassan condescended to no explanation or excuse; and as they had liberty ashore freely allowed them, they were content to await his movements.

As Hassan raised his eyes to the ruins, for the hundredth time during his morning's walk, his steps were arrested at the sight of a large column of smoke, rising upward from the plateau against the dark background of the higher hill. He rubbed his eyes, and looked again—it had grown larger and more steady. At a little distance another little column of blue began to arise. Hassan's heart leaped tumultuously in his breast. Another one!—and the signal would be complete!

"Man the boat!" he shouted, with an energy that startled the sleeping galley slaves from their benches. "Man the boat instantly." And Hassan seized the painter by which the boat was moored, and pulling it in, sprang into the stern-sheets. Many of the crew had gone ashore, leaving a few men as guards for the galley slaves, but Hassan's impatient commands admitted of no delay. The boat was manned, and pushing off from the galley, rowed rapidly to land. Hassan sprang out as the bow touched the shore, and stopping merely to order its return to the galley, he set out over the beach in a straight line for the ruins.

His impatience had not permitted him to take a good observation of the bearing of the ruins from his point of departure on the shore, and he soon found that from the nature of the ground, broken as it was, and covered with bushes, he could not make a direct course, nor could he keep the signals in view. Luckily, however, before he had wandered wide, he met the mountaineer who had been despatched by Casbin to guide him. The fellow had seen him land, and hastening his steps, encountered him just as Hassan found himself completely at fault. Under his guidance, he soon passed the three or four miles of ascending ground, and reached the plateau.

The appearance of the rais was hailed with a shout of delight; in a few minutes all the members of the party were gathered round him in joyful salutation. The friendly greetings finished, the conversation subsided into a continued flow, which, however, was at length interrupted by the Berber, who, taking Hassan by the arm, intimated his wish to speak to him part.

"Your galley is ready for the reception of these people?" inquired Casbin, as the rais and himself took a seat upon a prostrate marble column.

"The Sea-Bird waits but a word to spread her wings and fly," replied Hassan, "and that word I shall give the instant they step on deck."

"And your officers and men, you are sure of your ability to deal with them?"

"I have arranged it all so that there will be no difficulty or trouble. My men are few, and the greater part of them are ashore. I have apprised the principal galley-slaves of my intention of liberating them; sending the few Moors remaining on board ashore, and then directing our course to some Christian port. They have pledged themselves to secrecy, moderation and submission."

"You will hardly need, then, any assistanee from me in disposing of your crew?"

"No, I require no aid. The affair is perfectly simple and easily managed. It has happened more than once that the slaves of a corsair have freed themselves, and mastered the crew, with no one to help them; it would be strange indeed if they could not in this case, when they have the co-operation of the rais himself. I thank you, nevertheless, for your kindness in offering assistance—would that you were going with us."

"It may not be," replied Casbin." "I am a son of the mountains; true, I have dwelt with the Arabs; as when we were playmates in tbe famous school of Tadulah. I have traversed the lowlands, I have visited Christian countries; but I am a true son of the mountains. With you the case is different; you have never been wholly a Moor; you will return to Christian lands; the habits and prejudices of your early boyhood will spring to life again in your mind, you will quickly adapt yourself to your new modes of life. No, Hassan, we must part; our paths lie in different directions; but I have not drawn you aside to mourn over the necessity which separates us. We can very well live apart—I wish to speak to you of a separation which is really a cause of grief."

"The separation of whom?" demanded Hassan, grasping the Berber's arm.

"Of these sisters," calmly replied Casbin. "One of them will go with you, the other has consented to remain with me

—she will become my wife. I am going now to visit the Fathers of the convent at Tetuan, and shall bring one of them back with me. To-night the ceremony will be performed which is necessary among Christians, to the validity of marriage; and Juanita will receive the sanction of the Church to her determination to remain with me."

"Will it be possible, think you, to persuade a priest to venture out of the town at night?" demanded Hassan.

"Trust to me for that," replied Casbin. "I shall not return without one. But I can offer stronger inducements for one to come if I can represent that others beside myself need the services of the Church."

Hassan started, and looked at the speaker inquiringly, but said nothing.

"You love the elder maiden," continued Casbin, placing his hand upon Hassan's arm; "you purpose marrying her. Why not do so to-night? If Juanita remains with me, Isabel must go with you alone. Make her your wife, and every objection vanishes. The opportunity is too good to be lost."

Hassan listened with a thrill of pleasure to the proposition. The double marriage would obviate all necessity of stopping at Cadiz, as—supposing that he was to take charge of both of the Gaditanas, he had proffered to do—and enable him to shape his course for England without delay.

"But what shall be done if Isabel will not consent?" he demanded.

"Press her hard upon the subject; let her understand the reasons for consenting. She is of a yielding nature. She will not be able to resist your arguments and entreaties combined."

"But if she still refuses?" queried Hassan, in a doubting tone.

"Then," replied Casbin, firmly, "by right of the relationship that will be established this night between us, I shall urge her remaining with her sister and my wife."

Hassan started to his feet. A look of alarm and anxiety crossed his face. His voice expressed the agitation of his feelings as he exclaimed:

"Go, bring the priest! She will consent—she must consent! Go, and I will answer for it that we are ready for the ceremony upon your return."

Hassan hurried off to the side of Isabel. Casbin looked

after him for a moment, with a smile upon his lips, and then proceeded to make some necessary alterations in his appearance preparatory to his descent to the town. His yellow locks were gathered up and secured beneath his cap. His turban was arranged so as to allow the loose ends to fall over his face. A small portion of coloring powder was rubbed upon his light beard and mustache. Thus disguised, he knew that his presence in Tetuan, a town half Berber and half Moresco, would excite no observation. At the head of three or four trusty fellows, who had orders to wait for him outside the walls, he led the way with a rapid step, and with an air of confidence that indicated a familiar acquaintance with the ground.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

It was midnight. A dozen blazing torches illuminated the desolate area of that ancient church, throwing their flickering light into the recesses of choir and transept, and upon the stained and crumbling walls, and o'er the wondering faces of a crowd of wild-looking Berbers, crowding the entrance to the roofless nave, and lighting up the ruins of the stone altar, before which were grouped the personages of our tale.

A shaven priest, dressed in a coarse gown of gray serge, girded by a hempen cord, stood bareheaded and barefooted with book in hand, before the kneeling group. His naturally coarse features were dignified by an expression of stern and lofty faith—that faith which has enabled the Church of Rome to send forth in all ages its legions of brave and enthusiastic ministers of religion to the farthest ends of the earth—a faith which alone supported the few devoted men composing the order of the Redemption, in their mission of mercy among the Christian-hating fanatics of Barbary.

The ceremony was finished; and, leaning on their husband's arm, the sisters left the chapel. It had been arranged that Hassan should conduct the party that night to the beach, where they would await the result of his attempt to dispossess his Moorish crew of their quarters in the galley. No difficulty was apprehended; but still, to aid if necessary, and for

greater security of his bride upon their return, Casbin ordered his Berbers to accompany him. The night was dark, the path tortuous, and before the beach was gained the first faint signs of morning began to show themselves. A short delay only was necessary before it was light enough for Hassan's signals to be observed from the galley.

A boat was promptly manned and pushed off. As soon as it reached the shore Hassan sprang into it, and ordered the men to pull back quickly to the galley. They would willingly have stopped and had some conversation with the rais, respecting his night's adventures and his plans for the future, but Hassan did not think it necessary to humor them, and there was something in his looks and manner that repelled and repressed all familiarity.

As the boat touched the side of the galley, he sprang to the deck—paused for a moment to glance around upon the few Moors, most of whom were busily employed on the forecastle in saluting the rising sun with their pious prostrations and mutterings—and then entered the cabin. In a few moments he re-appeared, bearing in his hands several keys. With one he unlocked the rude padlock fastening an arm-chest that was lashed to the foot of the main-mast, and threw open the lid. The only weapons it contained were a number of serviceable boarding sabres, which, from their shape, had evidently been intended for Christian hands. Without pausing, he advancee to a burly, red-faced galley-slave, and unfastened the chain which confined him to his bench.

"The time has arrived," said Hassan, in a low voice, and speaking in English. "Let me see how you will keep your pledge—I depend upon you. Take one of these swords quickly and quietly, and fall back to the cabin."

Without hesitating for a moment, Hassan liberated another and another, giving them all the same orders. The instant they were free they sprang up, seized each a sword, and moved aft to the cabin. The attention of the Moors was by this time aroused, but they were held motionless and silent by surprise and fear, until Hassan had freed as many as he thought requisite for his purpose.

There was a pause; fore and aft the galley there prevailed the most perfect silence. All hands were waiting the next movements of the rover. The Moors crowded together on the

forecastle. Hassan advanced to a position midway between them and the band of Christians, and in a loud voice addressed them:

"Down with your arms, my men! Obey my orders without resistance, and you will not be harmed. This galley is no longer a fitting place for you. Depart, then, in peace, and with God's blessing. There are, however, a number of you who were once Christians; if any renegade chooses to go with me, I can promise to take him to some European port. Pull in the boat, men, and jump into her. Be quick about it!" exclaimed Hassan, noticing a movement among the galley-slaves. "I want no bloodshed!"

To most of the renegades the offer of the rais came like a vision of heaven—of that heaven they had renounced and spurned—and they joyfully expressed their determination of availing themselves of the chance of escaping from the thraldom of El Islam. The native Moors, in eager haste, drew up one of the boats and crowded into it.

When fairly off, and pulling in the direction of the port, the remainder of the galley slaves were liberated. Hassan addressed them in a few words, exhorting them to order and quiet, as they hoped for safety. The English sailor he had first liberated he left in charge of the galley, while he again visited the shore. A number of volunteers rushed to man the boat, and Hassan pushing off, turned the bow in a direction at right angles to that pursued by the Moorish crew of the galley. The willing arms of the liberated galley slaves soon sent the boat to the beach, and Hassan leaped to the shore at a few yards from the spot where stood the anxious group awaiting him.

It was a terrible moment for the sisters—that moment of parting; parting, perhaps, never to see each other again—certainly not for a long interval of time. A terrible moment! Luckily for us, it occurs just at the conclusion of our tale. Anywhere else, and we should have felt compelled to describe the scene in all its details: the placid sea, smiling in the light of the morning sun; the rocky beach; the brown hills; the Berber guards and attendants, and the crowd of wild-looking Reefeans. We should have felt compelled to dwell upon the affection of the sisters for each other; to picture the overwhelming anguish of one, and the deep but depressed emotion of the other. Here, however, at the last page of our story, we

cannot do better than to leave the whole scene to the imagination of the reader.

But a short time could be permitted for leave-taking. It was necessary to reach the galley before the Moorish sailors, who had been sent ashore, should alarm the town. Hassan lifted his weeping bride into the boat, where were already seated his brother, with Abdallah and his daughter. He gave the word to the crew; the oars dipped into the water, and the boat shot out from the land.

Juanita pressed as far out upon the rocks as she could go. A jutting ledge screened her from observation from the shore. Casbin was by her side. In silence they watched the boat. They saw it gain the side of the galley—they saw its passengers transfer themselves to the deck. In a few minutes the yards were swayed aloft, the anchor weighed, the sails trimmed to the favoring breeze. They watched in silence the swift corsair as she glided away, until she rounded a projecting point, and disappeared from their view.

At the last glimpse of her white sail, Juanita buried her face in her hands, and burst into tears.

"I shall never see her again," she exclaimed; in reply to Casbin's soothing caress.

"Say not so, Juanita," returned Casbin. "Your correspondence, through the agency of the mission of the Redemption, will be easy and regular; and it will not be difficult to make arrangements for a visit from her. At any rate it will always be in your power to meet her upon European ground. You shall do so ere long; in the meantime, Juanita, you have no one but me!"

Juanita raised her eyes, gleaming through her tears with a look of passionate fondness, to his face. "I wish for no one else," she exclaimed; "Oh, Casbin, I am content!"

"My life! my soul!" exclaimed Casbin, pressing her to his breast. "It shall not be a fault of mine, if you are not ever so. Oh, Juanita, if my love, deep as that sea, pure as that sky, and fervid as that sun, can content you, you shall never repine!"

"Come, Juanita, let us to the hills. If we rest here longer, we shall have the whole town of Tetuan to visit us. Come, Queen of the Mozarg, to your mountain berdj—to your home in the Atlas!"

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Our story here properly closes; but as the reader, who has taken interest enough to follow thus far, may, perhaps, feel some curiosity as to the after fortunes of the principal characters, we will endeavor to satisfy him or her, in the fewest possible words.

And first, of the Sultan, who continued to live, and reign, the centre of civil and domestic broils until his death in 1727. His son, the ferocious Muley Sidan, having aroused the jealousy of the old tyrant, and refusing to appear at court, was despatched, at the instigation of his father, by his own women. The next in succession, Muley Abdelmelec, also incurring his father's ire, was compelled to retire from the court. Every effort was made to lure him back again; but finding all his efforts to bring his rebellious son into his power unsuccessful, Muley Ismael resolved to alter the succession, and publicly proclaimed another son, Muley Hammed Debby, heir to the throne.

Muley Debby reigned four years, and in the annals of tyranny there is not to be found another instance of such a monster. The vices and cruelties of Muley Ismael were completely eclipsed by this fiend in human guise. During his short reign he killed more than fifteen hundred persons with his own hands; and, besides, a countless host of wretches were destroyed by the most terrible tortures. To him succeeded another son of Muley Ismael, Muley Abdallah; who gave frequent evidence of a similarly reckless and cruel disposition. In 1757 his son, Sidi Hammed Ibn Abdallah, succeeded him. Hammed was followed by his son, Muley Yezzed Ibn Hammed. Upon the death of Yezzed, Muley Soliman, a comparatively mild and enlightened prince, mounted the throne; and after a peaceful life, was followed by the present reigning Sultan, Muley Abderrhaman, a quiet, common-place, money-loving character, in no way entitled to detain us from the more interesting personages of our tale, to whom we will return.

The rais and his party reached England in safety, where the brothers found no difficulty in substantiating their claims to the large fortune left by their father. With as little delay as was consistent with the administration of the rites of baptism and confirmation, necessary for the admission of Xaripha into the pale of the English Church, the Moresca and her lover were married. The brothers, with their brides, retired to the country, where the enthusiasm of love subsiding, as, alas! it ever does, let them down pleasantly upon the habits, duties, pleasures, friendships and affections of English domestic life. Abdallah, with the mercantile instinct strong within him, preferred a residence for the greater portion of the year in the city. He had capital, and great facilities in his profound knowledge of Moorish and Oriental manners, tastes and wants. He became a merchant of note, and for many years, the wealthy Mr. Asken bore rank among the mightiest of the merchant princes on 'Change.

It remains but to speak of the Berber and Juanita. To do so at length, to relate the history of the struggle which for years the gallant Amekran waged with the various obstacles which offered themselves almost at every step, to the execution of his designs; to describe his romantic adventures and his daring deeds, would be to write another book. Suffice it for us to say, that if, in such a desperate contest as that between one enlightened man, and a people, proud, bigoted, ignorant and moulded in the prejudices of two or three thousand years, the Berber did not command full success, he at least labored faithfully to deserve it. And in this he found, as he had expected, a worthy helpmate in the generous and spirited Juanita. His energy of soul, his dauntless courage, his noble ambition, received new impulses from her ardent and glowing sympathy. Her mind, expanding at once under the stimulus of passion, took, in its full length and width, a comprehensive view of her relations to him, of her duties to his people. The adventurous traveler may in the present day find many evidences of the influence which she exerted among the Beni Mozarg, although that tribe has been divided, scattered and the old landmarks nearly destroyed. He will find her name cherished in many families of the Ait Amore, and a current belief that she will yet return, with powerful armies at her command, to suppress by force the blood feuds of the Berbers, and drive the Moors out of Morocco. A belief

arising from the fact, that upon the death of Casbin, leaving no son to succeed him, she took her two daughters, and bidding adieu to the Atlas forever, crossed the Straits from Tetuan to Gibraltar, and thence to England, where, in the education of her children, the companionship of her sister and Xaripha, and in the exercise of all womanly charities and virtues, she passed the remainder of her days.

THE END.

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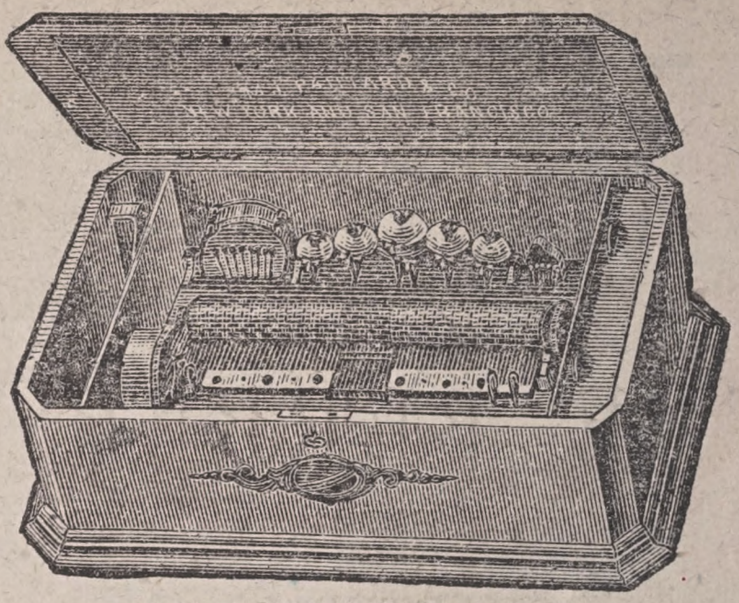

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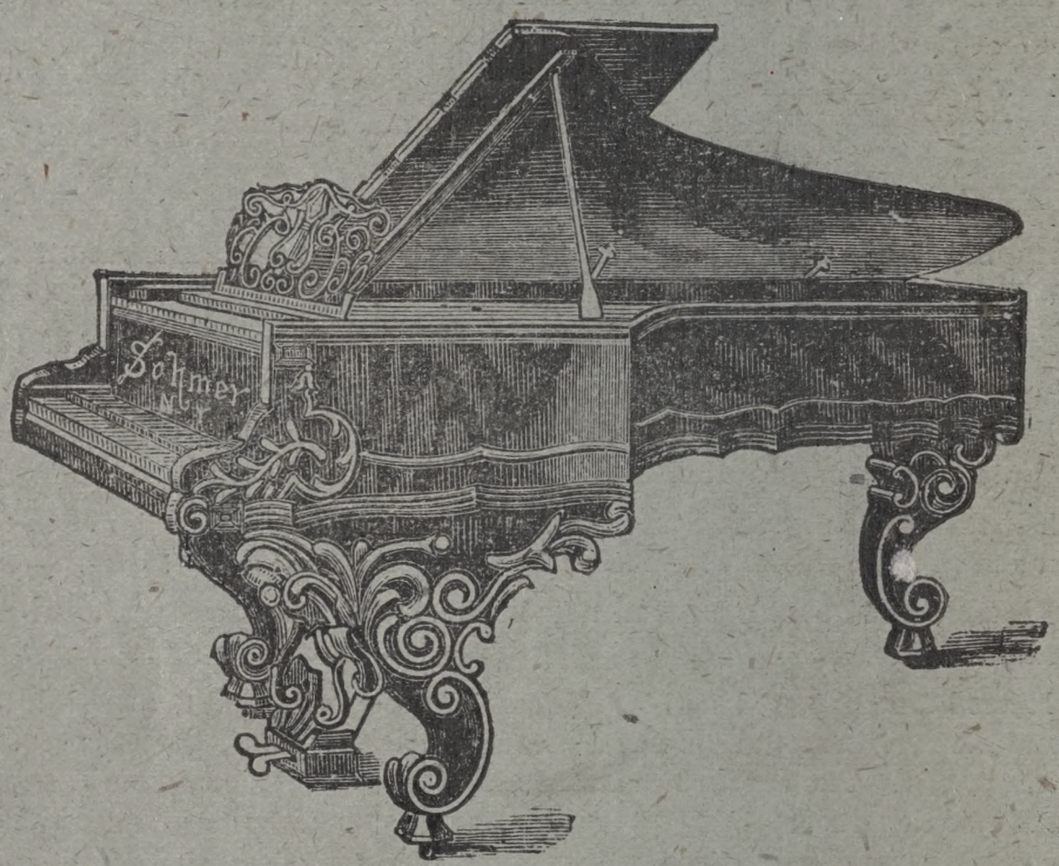

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